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Ihrem verehrten Kollegen und Freund

**Prof. Theodor Engelder, D. theol.,**

bringen zu seinem goldenen Amtsjubilaeum in dankbarer Anerkennung seiner langjaehrigen und treuen Dienste in der Kirche diese Jubilaeumsnummer dar seine Kollegen:

L. Fuerbringer, M. S. Sommer, W. G. Polack,
Th. Graebner, W. Arndt, Th. Hoyer,
J. T. Mueller, W. A. Maier, E. J. Friedrich,
J. H. C. Fritz, P. E. Kretzmann,

zugleich im Namen ihrer leidenden Kollegen R. W. Heintze und Th. Laetsch und ihres neueintretenden Kollegen Alfred Rehwinkel, unter gleichzeitiger Anwuenschung des ferneren reichen Segens Gottes fuer die Arbeit seines Lebensabends.

# Theodor Engelder,

geboren den 21. Januar 1865 zu Olean, New York, absolvierte das Concordia-Gymnasium zu Fort Wayne, Indiana, und das Concordia-Seminar zu St. Louis, Missouri, wo er sein Abiturium im Jahre 1886 machte und in das heilige Predigtamt entlassen wurde. Er diente dann als Pastor zu Sugar Grove und Logan, Ohio, von 1886 bis 1890, sodann zu Mount Clemens, Michigan, von 1890 bis 1914. Von 1914 bis 1926 war er Professor am Concordia-Seminar in Springfield, Illinois, und wurde dann an das Concordia-Seminar zu St. Louis, Missouri, berufen, wo er hauptsächlich Dogmatik und Symbolik gelehrt hat. Während er in Michigan stand, bekleidete er von 1903 bis 1912 das Amt eines Vizepräses, von 1912 bis 1914 das des Distriktspräses.

Der Jubilar hat sich auch literarisch betätigt. Schon vor einigen Dezennien erschienen seine *Twenty-four Tracts on the Creed*, in 1922 der Traktat „Fünfundsiebzig Segensjahre". Sodann diente er als Mitarbeiter an der *Concordia Cyclopedia* und dem neuesten Werk über vergleichende Symbolik *Popular Symbolics* und hat des öfteren als Referent auf Konferenzen und Synoden gedient.

Seine Hauptbeiträge für unsere theologischen Zeitschriften sind die folgenden:

**a. „Lehre und Wehre."**

Eine modern-lutherische Dogmatik. Band 73, 135 ff.
Gedanken eines Unionsmannes. Band 75, 172 ff.

**b. "Theological Monthly."**

The Lutherans at Lausanne. VII, 353 ff.; VIII, 2 ff.; 37 ff.
Notes on the Marburg Articles. IX, 101 ff.
The Troubles of the Interpolationists. IX, 136 ff.; 165 ff.; 204 ff.

**c. "Concordia Theological Monthly."**

Marburg: der Sieg des Schriftprinzips. I, 99 ff.; 183 ff.; 247 ff.; 321 ff.; 416 ff.; 498 ff.
Divergent Teaching on the Plan of Salvation. I, 331 ff.
The Active Obedience of Christ. I, 810 ff.; 888 ff.
Ist der Papst der Antichrist? II, 241 ff.
Zurück zu Luther! II, 258 ff.
Ein modern-lutherischer Beitrag zur Eschatologie. II, 641 ff.
De servo arbitrio. II, 826 ff.
The Theology of Grace. II, 881 ff.
Ein Blick in den Betrieb der Erfahrungstheologie. III, 321 ff.
The Shifting Sands of Science. III, 481 ff.
Morphologie des Luthertums. III, 667 ff.
Objective Justification. IV, 564 ff.

Zur Lehre von der Reue. V, 218 ff.; 369 ff.; 445 ff.; 497 ff.; 584 ff.; 657 ff.
Notes on Chiliasm. VI, 161 ff.; 241 ff.; 321 ff.; 401 ff.; 481 ff.
Kirche, Staat, Obrigkeit, Volk, Rasse, Familie — und Gottes Wort. VI, 881 ff.
Testifying the Gospel of the Grace of God. VII, 1 ff.
The Principles and Teachings of the Dialectical Theology. VII, 81 ff.; 161 ff.; 241 ff.; 329 ff.; 401 ff.

# Pastoralkonferenzen.

Der Theolog, dem diese Nummer unserer Zeitschrift gewidmet ist, hat nun fünfzig Jahre im Dienste unserer Kirche gestanden. Was er in diesem halben Jahrhundert durch Wort und Schrift gewirkt und ausgerichtet hat, wie seine Tätigkeit dem einzelnen und der Gesamtheit von großem Segen gewesen ist, das ist allgemein im Kreise unserer Synode und über deren Grenzen hinaus bekannt und wird bei anderer Gelegenheit und in anderer Verbindung weiter ausgeführt werden. Aber er hat in diesen fünfzig Jahren auch immer als Referent und Vortragender nicht bloß auf Synodalversammlungen, sondern auch auf Pastoralkonferenzen gedient, und seine Beteiligung an solchen Konferenzen und sein Verhalten dabei ist, wie alle, die Gelegenheit hatten, ihn zu beobachten, so vorbildlich gewesen, daß dieser wichtige Abschnitt in seinem Leben und Wirken uns Veranlassung gibt, einmal gerade über Pastoralkonferenzen ein Wort besonders an das Ministerium unserer Synode zu richten, das zum großen Teil zu D. Engelder als seinem Lehrer aufblickt, und ihnen die Wichtigkeit und den Segen der Pastoralkonferenzen recht ans Herz zu legen und sie zu ermuntern, durch rechte Teilnahme und Mitarbeit allüberall das Werk der Pastoralkonferenzen zu fördern.

Von allem Anfang an hat unsere Synode auf das Abhalten, den Besuch und die Beteiligung an Pastoralkonferenzen großes Gewicht gelegt, wie die Nebengesetze zu unserer jetzigen Konstitution, die aber in diesem Stück durchaus auf den alten Bestimmungen ruhen, zeigen:[1])

„1. Jede Distriktssynode teilt ihre Prediger in verschiedene Distrikts-Predigerkonferenzen ab und bestimmt, wie oft diese Konferenzen jährlich ihre Versammlungen abhalten. Die Protokolle dieser Distriktskonferenzen sind vier Wochen vor dem Zusammentritt der Distriktssynode dem Distriktspräses zuzusenden, der sie einem von ihm ernannten Komitee zur Prüfung übergibt, das dann darüber an die Synode zu berichten hat.

„2. Ebenso richtet die Distriktssynode, wo möglich, Distrikts-Lehrerkonferenzen ein, deren Protokolle gleichfalls in der angegebenen Weise der Synode zur Beurteilung vorgelegt werden.

„3. Außerdem empfiehlt die Synode ihren Pastoren und Lehrern, wo immer möglich, kleinere Konferenzen abzuhalten zur Besprechung wichtiger und nötiger Gegenstände der Lehre und Praxis.

„4. Bei allen Konferenzen sollen deren Glieder sich fleißig gegenseitig über Amtsführung, Privatstudium, den Stand der Gemeinden und Schulen usw. befragen und dabei eine freimütige, in herzlicher Liebe und Demut geführte Aufsicht und Zucht untereinander üben."

Und in einer weiteren Bestimmung über die Rechte und Pflichten der Distriktspräsides hat unsere Synode folgendes festgesetzt:

„Da die Distriktspräsides nach der Konstitution verpflichtet sind, Lehre, Leben und Amtsführung der Prediger und Schullehrer ihres Distrikts zu beaufsichtigen und sich einen Einblick in die kirchlich-sittlichen Zustände der Gemeinden ihres Distrikts zu verschaffen, so sollen sie auch so viel als möglich den Pastoral- und Lehrerkonferenzen ihres Distrikts beiwohnen, in Berufssachen die Gemeinden ihres Distrikts beraten und auch sonst auf Ersuchen Rat und Antwort erteilen. Auch hierbei können sie sich der Hilfe der Visitatoren bedienen." [1])

1) Synodalhandbuch, S. 24. 25; englische Ausgabe, S. 25. 26.

Jeder, der diesen Bestimmungen etwas Nachdenken widmet und sodann die Geschichte und Entwicklung unserer Synode damit vergleicht, wird sofort die Weisheit und Bedeutung solcher Bestimmungen erkennen. Gerade die Pastoralkonferenzen sind unter Gottes Leitung, Führung und Segen hauptsächlich das Mittel gewesen, unser Ministerium zusammenzuhalten in Einheit der Lehre und der Praxis. Und zugleich haben sie den einzelnen Pastoren Gelegenheit gegeben zu weiterer Fortbildung auf dem Gesamtgebiet der Theologie, haben sie in den Stand gesetzt, die Zeit und die Zeiterscheinungen recht zu erkennen und zu beurteilen, haben ihnen geholfen, schwierige Fragen im Gemeindeleben richtig zu beantworten, sind Veranlassung gewesen, den persönlichen Kontakt, der für die Einheit und das brüderliche Verhältnis der Pastoren untereinander so wichtig ist, herzustellen und zu bewahren und brüderliche Belehrung, Ermahnung, Ermunterung und Tröstung mitzuteilen. Wir können hier nicht genügend sagen und ausführen, welchen Nutzen und Segen der Besuch der Pastoralkonferenzen uns persönlich in mehr als fünfzig Jahren gebracht hat, so daß es für uns unverbrüchliche Regel ist, keine Pastoralkonferenz ohne genügenden Grund und dringende Not zu versäumen und ihr von Anfang bis zu Ende beizuwohnen.

Aber manche werden vielleicht dem Gesagten nicht beistimmen. Je größer unsere Synode wird, desto größer wird auch die Gefahr, in diesem Stücke des Besuchs der Pastoralkonferenzen gleichgültig zu werden, den Nutzen und den Segen des brüderlichen Verkehrs per mutuum colloquium et consolationem fratrum, wovon unser Bekenntnis an der bekannten Stelle redet,[2] geringzuschätzen. Nun ist unsere Beobachtung seit vielen Jahren diese, daß denen, die Distriktssynoden und Pastoralkonferenzen nachlässig besuchen oder teilnahmlos ihnen beiwohnen, es auch sonst in manchen Stücken mangelt: in bezug auf ihr Fortstudium, in Hinsicht auf die Gewissenhaftigkeit in der Predigt, im Jugendunterricht, in der Privatseelsorge, im Synodalinteresse, wohl auch im privaten Christenleben, in der innerlichen Hochschätzung ihres heiligen Amtes und seiner großen, heiligen Verpflichtungen. Aber es werden bisweilen auch unzufriedene, tadelnde Worte und Vorwürfe gegen die Abhaltung und Führung mancher Pastoralkonferenzen ausgesprochen; und so sehr uns der rechte Stand und das innere, geistliche Wachstum und Gedeihen unserer Synode am Herzen liegt, so nachdrücklich möchten wir auch die rechte Führung, die rechte Arbeit und das rechte Verhalten auf Pastoralkonferenzen betonen. Unser voriger Präses hat mehr als einmal im Gespräch diese Reihenfolge gebildet: Wie unsere Lehranstalten sind, so sind dann die Pastoren und Lehrer, die daraus hervorgehen; wie die Pastoren und Lehrer sind, so sind dann die Gemeinden; und wie die Gemeinden sind, so ist dann die Synode. Deshalb benutzen wir diese Gelegenheit, einige Worte darüber zu sagen, dabei aus unserer Be-

2) Schmalkaldische Artikel, III, 4, *Triglotta*, S. 490. Vgl. auch Großer Katechismus, Achtes Gebot, § 275, *Triglotta*, S. 658.

obachtung und Erfahrung auch die eine oder andere Erinnerung einzuflechten, aber vor allem die Hauptsachen, die bei Pastoralkonferenzen stets im Auge behalten werden müssen, hervorzuheben.

Beginnen wir mit einigen Äußerlichkeiten. Pünktlichkeit gehört auch mit zu dem rechten, lobenswerten Verhalten eines Predigers, und Pünktlichkeit im Besuch der Pastoralkonferenzen darf nicht übersehen werden. Der Heiland, der rechte Menschenkenner, hat gewiß nicht ohne Grund auch die Treue im Kleinen hervorgehoben und gesagt: „Wer im Geringsten treu ist, der ist auch im Großen treu", Luk. 16, 10; 19, 17. Zu solcher Pünktlichkeit gehört aber, daß man zu Anfang der Konferenz anwesend ist und bis zum Schluß bleibt. Das läßt sich ganz gut einrichten. Aber jeder unter uns wird zugestehen, daß es da an manchen Orten fehlt. Nicht bloß der Vorsitzer und der Sekretär und der Ortspastor sollen zu der bestimmten Stunde sich einfinden, sondern jedes Glied der Konferenz. Auch die Eröffnungsandacht, bei der auch recht wohl öfters kurze, wohlvorbereitete freie Ansprachen über einen passenden biblischen Text gehalten werden könnten und sollten, und die Organisation einer Konferenz gehören zur Konferenz, und es ist wahrlich nicht einerlei, ob man an dem Gesang, an der Schriftlektion und an dem Gebet teilnimmt oder nicht.

Zur rechten Führung der Pastoralkonferenzen gehört sodann, daß ihre Glieder sich an den Verhandlungen auch beteiligen. Die Gaben hat Gott nach seiner Weisheit verschieden ausgeteilt. Der eine Bruder hat vor andern die Gabe, in seinen Reden seinen Brüdern wirklich etwas zu geben und besonders gute Konferenzarbeiten liefern zu können. Es braucht nicht jeder zu reden, und manchmal ist es auch angezeigt, daß sich ein Redner selbst in den rechten Schranken hält, nicht zu lange redet und nur redet, wenn er auch wirklich etwas zu sagen hat. Aber Anteilnahme an den Verhandlungen soll sich bei jedem finden. Es ist ein übles Ding, wenn der eine oder der andere draußen vor der Kirche das Wort führt, aber im Versammlungslokal nichts zu sagen weiß, als höchstens den Vorschlag zur Vertagung zu machen. Es ist ein übles Ding, wenn namentlich bei größeren Versammlungen zwei oder drei sich zusammensetzen, womöglich auf den hintersten Sitzen, und sich über andere Sachen besprechen und unterhalten oder wenn man es als das Nötigste ansieht, die neuesten Tagesereignisse in der Zeitung zu lesen. Man kann auch da nicht zwei Herren dienen, und man wird kein Interesse an den Verhandlungen gewinnen, wenn man sich eben nicht damit beschäftigt. Jeder Pastor ermuntert aus guten Gründen seine Gemeindeglieder immer und immer wieder, in den Gottesdiensten nicht die hinteren, sondern die vorderen Sitze einzunehmen. Wollen wir es nicht auch selbst tun und stets bedenken, daß auf unsern Konferenzen Gottes Wort, göttliche, heilige Dinge verhandelt werden?

Eine weitere Äußerlichkeit, die aber recht wichtig werden kann, ist diese, daß man die ganzen Verhandlungen sorgfältig plant mit rechter

Zeiteinteilung, daß darauf geſehen wird, daß genügend Referate und Vorträge auf das Programm geſetzt werden, ſo daß die ganze Zeit nutzbringend mit daran anſchließender Verhandlung und Diskuſſion ausgefüllt wird. Dies wird vor allem eine Pflicht des Vorſitzers ſein, der die Konferenz zu leiten und das vorbereitete Programm durchzuführen hat. Wenn wir manche Konferenzanzeigen anſehen, ſo kommen wir öfters auf den Gedanken, als ob bisweilen zu viele Gegenſtände angeſetzt ſind. Eben jetzt liegt eine ſolche Anzeige vor uns, in der der Sekretär ankündigt: „Jedes Mitglied der Konferenz ſoll bereit ſein, als Referent zu dienen.“ Das wird wohl ſeinen guten Grund haben. Aber das gehört auch mit zur Pflicht des Konferenzbeſuchers, daß, wenn ihm eine Arbeit aufgetragen wird, er dieſe Arbeit auch liefert, und wenn er durchaus nicht in der Lage iſt, die Konferenz zu beſuchen und ſeine Arbeit vorzulegen, den Vorſitzer benachrichtigt, damit dieſer anderweitige Beſtimmung treffen kann. Konferenzarbeiten ſind auch ein Stück Amtsarbeit. Und ebenſo wird auch darauf zu ſehen ſein, daß die für eine Konferenz angeſetzten Arbeiten wirklich zur Verhandlung kommen. Manch einer hat fleißig gearbeitet, lebt in der Sache, die er behandeln ſoll, und dann bekommt er nicht Gelegenheit, die Sache auch vorzutragen, und erſt bei einer ſpäteren Konferenz, vielleicht erſt nach einem Jahre, kann er dies tun. Das hat nachteiligen Einfluß auf die Friſche und Lebendigkeit der Darlegung.

Beſonders wichtig iſt aber dies, daß nun auch jedes Glied der Konferenz bereit iſt, mit ſeinen Gaben zu dienen und Arbeiten, die der Konferenz zum Nutzen gereichen können, vorzulegen. Das erfordert freilich Studium, oft ſehr fleißiges, anhaltendes Studium; aber dies iſt gerade auch ein Zweck der Paſtoralkonferenzen, ſolches Studium, überhaupt Fortſtudium im Amte, zu veranlaſſen. Paſtoralkonferenzen ſind und ſollen ſein und ſollen immer mehr werden ein postgraduate course, der einzige, der der großen Mehrzahl unſerer Paſtoren möglich iſt. Und der betreffende, der eine Arbeit vorzulegen hat, trägt ſelbſt den größten Gewinn davon, wenn er ſich intenſiv mit einer Sache beſchäftigt, fleißig darüber nachlieſt und nachdenkt und dann das Erarbeitete in paſſender Form ausführt.

Aber was für Arbeiten ſollen auf Konferenzen verhandelt werden? Wenn wir bedenken, daß die Konferenzen vor allem der Fortbildung der Paſtoren, der Erhaltung der Einigkeit in Lehre und Praxis, der Förderung in ihrem Amte dienen ſollen, ſo liegt darin, daß eben das ganze Gebiet der Theologie im Auge behalten werden ſollte, die großen Hauptſachen vor allem, aber ohne daß die zurücktretenden Materien ganz übergangen würden. Für eine Konferenz lutheriſcher Paſtoren ſollte es möglichſt Regel ſein, daß mit einer Arbeit über Gottes Wort, mit einer bibliſchen Betrachtung oder Auslegung begonnen wird. Was Luther einmal in anderer Verbindung, in ſeiner „Vorrede auf M. Joh. Spangenbergs Poſtille“, ſagt, gilt gewiß auch für Paſtoralkonferenzen:

„Darum heißet's: wache, ſtudiere, attende lectioni (1 Tim. 4, 13). Fürwahr, du kannſt nicht zu viel in der Schrift leſen; und was du lieſeſt, kannſt du nicht zu wohl verſtehen; und was du wohl verſteheſt, kannſt du nicht zu wohl lehren; und was du wohl lehreſt, kannſt du nicht zu wohl leben. Experto crede Ruperto. Der Teufel iſt's, die Welt iſt's, unſer Fleiſch iſt's, die wider uns wüten und toben. Darum, liebe Herren und Brüder, Pfarrherren und Prediger, betet, leſet, ſtudieret, ſeid fleißig! Fürwahr, es iſt nicht Faulenzens, Schnarchens und Schlafens Zeit zu dieſer böſen, ſchändlichen Zeit. Brauchet eurer Gabe, die euch vertrauet iſt, und offenbaret das Geheimnis Chriſti.“ 3)

In ſeinen auch ſprachlich oft ſo originellen und packenden Tiſchreden ſagt der Reformator:

„Meine Theologie habe ich nicht auf einmal gelernt, ſondern ich habe immer tiefer danach forſchen müſſen. Da haben mich meine Anfechtungen zu gebracht.... Ich habe den Papſt, die Univerſitäten und alle Gelehrten und durch ſie den Teufel am Halſe kleben gehabt. Die haben mich in die Bibel gejagt, daß ich ſie hab' fleißig geleſen und damit ihren rechten Verſtand endlich erlangt.“ 4)

Prof. A. Pieper von Thiensville, Wis., hat ſehr treffend geſagt:

„Unſere Gefahr iſt die Akedie im Studium, die ſich ſo leicht mit dem gewonnenen dogmatiſchen Wiſſensſchatz für Predigt und Seelſorge begnügt und das reiche Urmaterial der Schrift unausgebeutet beiſeite liegen läßt. Der dürfen wir, die wir zu Hirten und Wächtern des Volks Gottes berufen ſind, gerade in dieſer Zeit, da der vielgeſtaltige Unglaube und das bibelgleichgültige, dem Modernismus immer ſchneller verfallende Sektentum des Landes uns auf allen Seiten beſtürmt, nicht erliegen. Selbſt die doppelte Arbeit des Predigens in beiden Sprachen, die der Übergang ins Engliſche uns auferlegt, darf unſer Bibelſtudium nicht verkürzen, ſondern muß es vielmehr intenſiver geſtalten, damit gerade die nun engliſch werdende Generation in der Heiligen Schrift recht heimiſch werde.“ 5)

Ich geſtehe offen, daß es mir nicht gefällt, wenn auf einer größeren Konferenz begonnen wird mit der Beſprechung eines Gegenſtandes, der an der Peripherie liegt oder der eine praktiſche Frage zum Gegenſtand hat oder der gar die Finanzlage der Synode behandelt. Und gerade deshalb ſollte auch jedes Glied der Konferenz von Anfang an anweſend ſein, damit er eine ſolche Arbeit aus und über Gottes Wort vollſtändig hören kann. Freilich, ſolche exegetiſch-bibliſchen Arbeiten, die dann vielleicht auch die Grundlage für Predigten bilden ſollen, erfordern Studium, ſorgfältige Vorbereitung und Ausarbeitung; aber es lohnt ſich immer, ſolche Arbeiten zu unternehmen und anzuhören. Es iſt das ewige Wort Gottes, das behandelt wird, wovon Luther ſagt:

„Es iſt alles beſſer nachgelaſſen denn das Wort, und iſt nichts beſſer getrieben denn das Wort; denn daß dasſelbe ſollte im Schwange unter den Chriſten gehen, zeigt die ganze Schrift an, und Chriſtus auch ſelbſt ſagt, Luk. 10, 39. 42: ‚Eines iſt vonnöten‘, nämlich, daß Maria zu Chriſti Füßen ſitze und höre ſein Wort täglich; das iſt das beſte Teil, das zu erwählen iſt und nimmer weggenommen wird. Es iſt ein ewig Wort; das andere muß alles vergehen, wieviel es auch der Martha zu ſchaffen gibt.“ 6)

Und dabei verſäume man doch nicht, ſich bei dem Vortrag auch Notizen zu machen. Es iſt um das Gedächtnis ein merkwürdiges Ding.

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3) XIV, 397.

4) Erlanger Ausgabe, 57, 99.

5) „Theologiſche Quartalſchrift“, Januar 1932, S. 41.

6) X, 225.

Manches, was man gern merken möchte und ſollte, entſchwindet einem; anderes, was man ſehr wohl vergeſſen könnte, bleibt einem in den Gedanken hängen. Aber die alte Wahrheit, der ſchon der deutſche Dichter Ausdruck gegeben hat:

Denn was man ſchwarz auf weiß beſitzt,
Kann man getroſt nach Hauſe tragen,

gilt auch hier. Ich weiß von mehr als einem Konferenzteilnehmer, der ſein beſtimmtes Notizbuch für ſolche Aufzeichnungen hat. So wird das Gehörte zum bleibenden Beſitz, auf den man dann bei Gelegenheit zurückgreifen kann. Kürzlich iſt einer unſerer tüchtigen Theologen im Pfarrſtande ſelig heimgegangen, P. Fr. Bruſt. Eine Anzahl gründlicher Synodalreferate und trefflicher Konferenzarbeiten zeugen von ſeinem Fleiß, ſeinem Studium und ſeinem theologiſchen Wiſſen.[7] Aber es iſt mir unvergeßlich, wie dieſer ſelbe Mann, als ich einmal einen Vortrag über einen der kleinen Propheten zu halten hatte, der keineswegs etwas Beſonderes war, ſich doch beſtändig Aufzeichnungen machte, und als ich mit ihm nach Schluß der Sitzung darüber redete und meine Verwunderung ausſprach, meinte er ganz kurz und trocken: „Das kann ich ja alles für meine Predigt gebrauchen.“ Und bei ſolchen bibliſchen und exegetiſchen Arbeiten ſollte man nicht beſonders an cruces interpretum denken, ſondern an die Hauptſachen. Ich habe wohl ein halbes dutzendmal oder noch öfter beobachtet, daß man die Stelle von der Totentaufe, 1 Kor. 15, 29, herausgegriffen hat. Nun läßt ſich über dieſe Frage eine ganz intereſſante Unterſuchung anſtellen, zumal da die Mormonen ſo viel daraus machen; ich ſelbſt habe mich mehr als einmal damit beſchäftigt. Aber ſchließlich wird man doch ſich beſcheiden müſſen aus dem einfachen Grunde, weil Paulus hier wahrſcheinlich auf einen Gebrauch ſich bezieht, den wir nicht näher kennen und der wohl auch trotz alles Forſchens unbekannt bleiben wird. Es gibt wichtigere Aufgaben; es gibt genug bibliſche Bücher und Abſchnitte, in die man durch fortgeſetztes Studium immer tiefer eindringen und immer reichere Belehrung gewinnen kann. Luther ſagt in ſeiner „Vorrede auf das Neue Teſtament“ vom Jahre 1522: „Summa, St. Johannis Evangelium und ſeine erſte Epiſtel, St. Pauli Epiſteln, ſonderlich die zu den Römern, Galatern, Epheſern, und St. Petri erſte Epiſtel, das ſind die Bücher, die dir Chriſtum zeigen.“ [8] Und dazu nehme man aus dem Alten Teſtament die Propheten und Pſalmen, beſonders den zweiten Teil des Jeſajas, des altteſtamentlichen Paulus, deſſen 53. Kapitel Luther „ſonderlich hold“ war und das er erſt kürzer und in ſeinen ſpäteren Jahren ausführlich ausgelegt hat.[9] Was durch ſolche Konferenzarbeiten erreicht

7) „Die Gleichniſſe unſers HErrn“, „Lehre und Wehre“, 59, 337. „Eine Studie über den Kreuzestod unſers HErrn“, „Lehre und Wehre“, 47, 33, und andere Artikel.

8) XIV, 91.

9) VI, 616—638; 638—733.

werden kann, zeigen z. B. die feinen Pſalmenauslegungen unſers ganz in der Stille wirkenden, faſt unbekannten, vor etwa fünfzehn Jahren in Minneſota verſtorbenen P. W. Becker,[10]) mit vielen andern in unſern Zeitſchriften zerſtreuten wertvollen Arbeiten anderer Glieder unſers Miniſteriums, in Wahrheit ſchöne Vorbilder für unſer jüngeres, hauptſächlich im Engliſchen arbeitendes Paſtorengeſchlecht.

Ebenſo wie eine bibliſche Studie oder Exegeſe ſollte auch irgendein Abſchnitt der chriſtlichen Lehre auf einer Paſtoralkonferenz behandelt werden. Es tut uns wahrlich not, daß wir uns immer wieder in die chriſtliche Lehre verſenken, und das Gebiet iſt ſo groß und reich, und die Gaben, die Gott auch jetzt noch ſeiner Kirche gibt, ſind ſo mannigfaltig, daß, wenn man nur den rechten Sinn hat, man ſolchen Darlegungen mit Intereſſe folgen wird. Und wenn man, zumal auf kleinen Konferenzen, keine neuen Arbeiten vorlegen und vornehmen kann, dann mache man alte, bewährte Ausführungen zum Gegenſtand des gemeinſchaftlichen Leſens und Beſprechens: einen Artikel aus unſern Bekenntnisſchriften, einen Abſchnitt aus Piepers Dogmatik, ein Kapitel aus Walthers „Geſetz und Evangelium", das D. Dau vor einigen Jahren ſo gut ins Engliſche übertragen hat — ein beſonders wichtiger Gegenſtand heutzutage, wo unter dem Einfluß verhängnisvoller reformierter Literatur der Unterſchied und die reinliche Scheidung von Geſetz und Evangelium ſo leicht verlorengeht.

Aber auch die Geſchichte der Kirche darf auf Konferenzen nicht übergangen werden. Wenn, wie Luther einmal ſagt, die Hauptſache des kirchgeſchichtlichen Studiums dieſe iſt, daß man ſieht und lernt, wie es dem lieben Evangelium in der Welt gegangen iſt, dann breitet ſich vor unſern Augen ein ſo rieſiges Feld aus, daß man immer wieder neue Partien herausgreifen kann zu beſonderer Behandlung.

Und endlich — last, but not least — ſind Paſtoralkonferenzen für Träger des heiligen Amtes ja hauptſächlich angeſetzt, um ſie gerade in den verſchiedenen Stücken ihrer Amtstätigkeit zu fördern. Deshalb darf auch die praktiſche Theologie nicht übergangen, ſondern muß ganz beſonders betont werden. Und wenn wir daran denken, daß das moderne kirchliche Leben, die neue Zeit, ſo manche neue Fragen in das Gemeinde- und Synodalleben bringt, ſo wird es auch da nicht an Gegenſtänden zur Behandlung fehlen. Man braucht ſich wahrlich nicht auf ſpitzfindige Fragen einzulaſſen oder lange zu ſuchen, was für Themata auf das Programm geſetzt werden ſollten. Es iſt eine ſolch große Fülle, daß die Auswahl ſchwierig wird und darum ein Programmkomitee, deſſen Glieder beſonders für die Formulierung eines allſeitigen Programms begabt ſind, der Konferenz die nötigen Vorſchläge machen und der Vorſitzer dann auf die rechte Durchführung des Programms achten ſollte.

10) Pſalm 90. „Lehre und Wehre", 65, 1. Sünde und Gnade nach Pſalm 130. Synodalbericht des Minneſota-Diſtrikts von 1919, S. 20.

Manch einer hat dann noch besondere Fragen auf dem Herzen, in denen er Rat und Meinung seiner Amtsbrüder begehrt. Solche lassen sich vielleicht manchmal besser in einem kleineren Kreise besehen und beantworten; andere Fragen, die mehr oder weniger alle Glieder der Konferenz interessieren und angehen, mögen in größeren Versammlungen zur Sprache kommen. Dabei werden öfters Meinungsverschiedenheiten auftreten. Bisweilen werden die Geister aufeinanderstoßen. Das ist kein Nachteil, sondern dient zur Klärung. Nur soll jedes Konferenzglied darauf achten, daß alles im Sinne rechter Brüderlichkeit und Liebe geredet und gehandelt wird. Und wenn einmal ein unebenes Wort gesprochen oder die Geduld etwas auf die Probe gestellt wird, oder wenn ein andermal die Brüderlichkeit und Liebe verletzt wird, dann sind wir eben auch dazu Brüder und so eng durch das Band des gemeinsamen Glaubens verbunden, daß wir in brüderlicher Weise die Sache in Ordnung bringen. Eben als wir diese Ausführungen zu Papier brachten, lasen wir in ganz anderem Interesse eine Stelle aus einem der schönen ungedruckten Briefe Walthers, den er einem unserer damaligen Collegeprofessoren schrieb. Walther sagte — und solche Verhältnisse finden sich auch heutzutage —:

„Ich bin überzeugt, Ihr Heimweh nach dem Predigtamt hat seinen Grund lediglich in einem gewissen Ihnen unangenehmen Verhältnis zu einer Person, nicht in Ihrer gegenwärtigen Arbeit. Ach, lieber Bruder, bedenken Sie doch, auch im Predigtamte begegnen wir Menschen, denen wir lieber nicht begegnen möchten, und unser liebes Fleisch ist die Ursache, wenn wir uns dann nicht in Gottes Zusammenführen fügen, sondern ihm aus der Schule gehen möchten. Könnten wir doch ohne Zweifel gar nicht die Heiligung erlangen, ohne welche niemand den HErrn sehen wird, wenn uns Gott nicht in Lagen und Verbindungen setzte, die eine stete Übung unserer Liebe, Demut, Geduld, Selbstverleugnung sind."

Sehr wichtig ist es und eine besondere Gabe Gottes, wenn nun auch in den einzelnen Konferenzen Leiter vorhanden sind, die wirklich leiten und führen, deren Worte und Taten wohl erwogen sind, die durch fleißiges Studium und treue Amtsarbeit den jüngeren und unerfahreneren Brüdern rechte Lehrer und Führer werden können. Und wenn jedes Glied der Konferenz ferner bedenkt, daß auch ein Seelsorger einen Seelsorger haben soll, dem er ganzes, volles Vertrauen schenkt, dem er gerade auch bei Gelegenheit der Konferenz das eine oder andere vorlegen, dem er einen Einblick in seine geistlichen Nöte und Bedürfnisse geben kann, dann wird gewiß auch nach dieser Seite hin eine Pastoralkonferenz von Segen sein. Daß dann außerhalb der Sitzungen, in dem gemeinschaftlichen Verkehr, in den christlichen Häusern, die den Konferenzgliedern Gastfreundschaft gewähren, privatim noch so manches besehen und besprochen wird, ist eine schätzenswerte Zugabe zur Konferenz.

Der Schreiber dieser Zeilen blickt zurück auf eine einundfünfzigjährige Tätigkeit in der Kirche. Er sieht es als eine besondere Gnadenführung Gottes an, daß er die ganzen Jahre in Konferenzen gewesen ist, die wirklich das waren, was sie sein sollten, sehr verschieden in der Zusammensetzung und doch einheitlich. Er kennt nur zwei Synodaldistrikte

genauer nach dieser Seite hin, aber er denkt jetzt noch zurück an die kleinen und größeren Konferenzen in Michigan und in Missouri. Auf der allerersten Konferenz, die er besuchte, legte der selige D. Joseph Schmidt eine Arbeit vor über „Die letzten Dinge", die ihm, obwohl er gerade vom Seminar kam und kurz zuvor die eschatologischen Lehren gehört hatte, doch unvergeßlich geblieben ist. Sie war dogmatisch exakt und gründlich und doch zugleich wahrhaft erbaulich im biblischen Sinne des Wortes und schloß sehr passend mit dem Verse: „Ich hab' von ferne, HErr, deinen Thron erblickt." Und als der Schreiber dann nach St. Louis versetzt wurde, hatte er wieder Gelegenheit, Männer zu hören, die wirklich Leiter und Führer waren und die immer auch den Konferenzen mit Arbeiten dienten. Er nennt nur die selig heimgegangenen Professoren Pieper, Stöckhardt, A. L. Gräbner, Bente, Mezger, die Pastoren C. C. Schmidt, Otto Hanser. „Mancherlei Gaben, aber ein Geist." Der Schreiber hat, als er die hier ausgeführten Gedanken erwog, gerade zwei Pastoralkonferenzen beigewohnt, abgehalten in der Passions- und Osterzeit und von einer großen Anzahl Pastoren besucht. Bei der einen Versammlung lagen drei Arbeiten vor: eine exegetische über den großen messianischen Leidenspsalm, Ps. 22, eine Zusammenstellung der Ähnlichkeit und Gleichartigkeit der Gedanken und Ausdrücke des Römer- und Galaterbriefs mit Hinweisen auf die etwaige Entstehungs- und Abfassungszeit, und ein Vortrag über den großen lutherischen Erweckungsprediger Ludwig Hofacker, in dem sein Leben und sein Wirken geschildert, seine besondere Bedeutung, aber auch seine Mängel hervorgehoben wurden. Auf der zweiten Konferenz wurden folgende Gegenstände behandelt: die Wittenberger Konkordie von 1536 mit Hinweis auf die heutigen Unionsbewegungen, der Pastor und die Vollziehung der kirchlichen Trauung, die Ereignisse der vierzig Tage zwischen Ostern und Himmelfahrt und deren Bedeutung für uns. Bei allen Arbeiten fand auch eine Diskussion statt, bei der etwas herauskam. Der Schreiber selbst hat sie mit vollstem Interesse angehört, und so jeder, der überhaupt religiöses, theologisches Interesse hat. Er hat da viel gelernt. Und er schließt diese Ermunterung zur fleißigen und treuen Arbeit auf Konferenzen mit dem Wort, das Luther in der Vorrede zu seinem Kleinen Katechismus sagt: „Darum siehe darauf, Pfarrherr und Prediger! Unser Amt ist nun ein ander Ding worden, denn es unter dem Papst war; es ist nun ernst und heilsam geworden. Darum hat es nun viel mehr Mühe und Arbeit, Gefahr und Anfechtungen, dazu wenig Lohn und Dank in der Welt. Christus aber will unser Lohn selbst sein, so wir treulich arbeiten. Das helfe uns der Vater aller Gnaden! Dem sei Lob und Dank in Ewigkeit durch Christum, unsern HErrn! Amen." L. Fürbringer.

# New Revisions of Comparative Religion.

The three stages of down-town metropolitan real estate: the brick store, the steel and concrete sky-scraper, the parking lot, fitly describe the history of the comparative study of religions. The foundation was laid in philology when Max Mueller together with many a less brilliant, but more profound student of language developed the imposing structure of the science of religion on the basis of etymological study. The structure was laid low less than fifty years later, and on its place was erected the colossal pile of the anthropological study of religion, based on the evolutionary theory. The reconstruction of Old Testament history by the higher criticism is but a sector out of this enormous sphere of research. To-day the sky-scraper has been carried away piece-meal and its foundations destroyed by the cultural anthropology. It is time to pause and survey the criticism by which this unexpected change has been brought about.

There is a strange parallel between the earlier views of evolutionistic ethnologists and the fallacy of orthodox geology. The latter assumes that the evolutionary principle is true — that plant and animal life has developed from the single-cell stage to the multicellular: from star-fish and trilobite to fish, reptile, bird, mammal, and man. It fixes the age of a stratum of rock through index fossils. Fossil remains of the lower animals indicate ancient rock, whereas remains of four-footed beasts indicate a more recent stratum. The entire system of historical geology is built up upon the assumption that animals and plants on earth gradually developed from simple to more complex forms. When the biologist is asked for his proof of evolution, he directs us to paleontology, to the sequence of life indicated by the fossils, as the only direct proof. In like manner, the ethnologist has assumed the correctness of the theory which pictures man as a descendant from brute ancestors. And since it is impossible to assume, on this premise, that the early forms of religion were the most spiritual and perfect, he has to reject absolutely the story of man's creation and his knowledge of a Supreme Being in the first stage of his history. He has to assume dark gropings and clumsy seeking after the supernatural, the Old Man of the cave-dweller's dreams, identified by the savage with some being outside of him and above him, ghosts of ancestors casting evil spells, demons and sprites inhabiting rocks and trees, until there would be an emergence of one god above the rest and finally the recognition of a World Soul or Superior Architect. According to this scheme the ethnologist arranged the data of his research in the religions of mankind. And it is this evolutionistic framework of comparative religion that has now crashed. Biological evolution has been exposed to the withering fire of such works as *The Dogma of Evolution* by

L. T. More. The evolution of religion has more recently been disavowed by a school of sociologists which is as little under the sway of historic Christian concepts as was Professor More when he exposed the fallacies of the biologists.

Harvey Wickham, in his notable discussion of modern Pseudoscience, *The Misbehaviorist* (1931), finds fault with Lewis Browne's *This Believing World* on account of the "illimitable *naiveté*" (p. 243) with which he propounds his idea of the origin of religion: "In the beginning was fear, and fear was in the heart of man. . . . And he, poor gibbering half-ape, nursing his wound in some draughty cave, could only tremble. . . . Man had to have faith in himself or die — and he would not die. So he had faith [in himself, you will note] and developed religion" (p. 244). The picture is familiar to the reader. The assumption is that man's culture began in a cave. What is Wickham's attitude? He asks: "Is it necessary to remark that there is no evidence whatever pointing to this as the early state of man? that it is merely an assumption, assumed to help along one particular theory of evolution, and is contradicted by those modern researches tending to show that savages, when actually degraded, are degenerate rather than primitive? Yet Browne illustrates his text with an original pen-and-ink sketch of this missing link. The drawing is extremely good and spirited. One only wishes it were a photograph" (p. 244).

The most notable discussion of present-day scientific philosophy is Bernhard Bavink's *The Natural Sciences* (American translation, The Century Company, 1932). After pronouncing the origin of the ideas of law, morals, and religion as "most difficult to answer," the author summarizes the present-day opinion of the scientific world as follows: "Numerous recent investigators no longer adhere to the series which was once very generally assumed, namely, the order of development: animism, fetishism, totemism, polytheism, henotheism (monolatry), monotheism or pantheism. They regard as more probable in the beginning an indefinite belief in a mysterious power dwelling in all sorts of things, the 'mana,' which is later succeeded by animistic and totemistic ideas, fetishism being a degenerate form which branched off from the line of upward development" (p. 510). This means of course that in the opinion of this acute and exceedingly well-read observer (Bavink's book has been a sensation in our American universities) the huge dissertations on comparative religion based upon the method of Spencer and Frazer have involved a fundamental error — the evolutionary development of religion according to a scheme parallel to the gradual rise of reason assumed by the evolutionary hypothesis.

The dogma of original ancestral ghost-worship was the contribution of Herbert Spencer to the discussion of the origin of religion.

This theory was presented by him in the first volume of *Principles of Sociology,* which appeared in instalments from 1874 to 1877. He assumes of course the origin of man from brute beginnings. The first conception of a supernatural being was that of a ghost. With propitiation of the ghost comes ancestor-worship, and from ancestors are derived the gods. Reading his famous work one is impressed by the fact that he stakes all upon the thesis that also the religion of Semitic and Aryan peoples originated from ancestor-worship, demonstrating to his own satisfaction that his evolutionary scheme holds here as elsewhere and that alleged moral practises are really ancestor-worship. Dr. Clifford Kirkpatrick of the University of Pennsylvania has subjected Spencer's theory to a searching criticism. He quotes Spencer's work (p. 429): "Evidence was given that by the highest races as by the lowest, ancestor-worship, similarly practised, similarly originated deities; and we saw that it even now survives among the highest races, though overshadowed by a more developed worship. Concluding, then, that from worship of the dead every other kind of worship has arisen, we proceeded to examine those worships which do not externally resemble it, to see whether they have traceable kinships." Regarding this conclusion Kirkpatrick says that "it may be suspected he entertained it prior to his examination of the facts" (*Religion in Human Affairs,* p. 36).

What has been said by certain critics of Spencer's principles of sociology ever since they first appeared has gradually become the opinion of scientists everywhere. In the first place, his method was purely deductive. "Facts are marshaled only to support a preconceived hypothesis. His unfortunate and loose use of the comparative method, *i. e.,* his taking facts out of their cultural setting for comparison, invalidates much of his work. His conclusions are so dogmatically stated that the demonstration of a single exception to his plan is bound to be fatal, and many such exceptions to his rigid, evolutionary scheme have been found" (Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.,* p. 41). But the reversal of scientific opinion touches not only the specific theory of Spencer. It has not only set aside the theory of E. B. Tylor (*Primitive Culture*), who was not quite so dogmatic an evolutionist as Spencer, yet derived all spiritual beings from the ghost-soul observed in dreams and visions. It has been recognized that the entire method of taking the concept of evolution from the field of biology and applying it in the field of human society or culture is an uncritical procedure.

After the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 book after book appeared tracing the evolution of this or that social institution through definite stages. And so the evolution of religion has been arranged in definite stages, "which may be useful in making a text-book on sociology clear to the student, but do not necessarily

teach him the truth" (Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 142). In order to understand the adjustments which science has made in treating this problem in anthropology, we must briefly call to mind the classifications of religion on the evolutionary basis which have been propounded. A familiar classification is that which traces the development of religion according to the following scheme: —

1. Primitive nature religions;

2. Animism and fetishism;

3. Polytheism represented by the mythologies of the ancient world, China, the Mediterranean empires, and the ancient Germans and Celts;

4. Polytheism united with a code of morality, like Brahmanism and Buddhism;

5. Monotheistic religions — Judaism, Christianity, Islam.

As regards this system, it is quite feasible to accept it as a taxonomic scheme. Even as we are able to accept the "periods" of geology as a systematic grouping or series, even when we decline to regard them as ages and eras, and as indicating a sequence of time. But the geologist does not simply say, In this order we classify the strata in order to have a scheme for systematic treatment; no, he says, in this order the strata of the earth were laid down. Just so anthropology has accepted for more than half a century a classification something like that given above as a definite sequence of stages through which the religions of the world have passed or are passing or will pass. Now, the remarkable phenomenon observable to-day is what might be called a revolt against the evolutionary scheme of religion. Especially our American anthropologists have in recent years announced a sharply critical attitude over against a presentation of this kind. The complaint is loud and insistent that in assuming that religion passes through specific stages there is a gross fallacy, a begging of the question, which assumes a sequence of stages instead of deriving inductively the change from form to form by recording the observation of such occurrence in each tribe of people.

Professor Kirkpatrick represents the most extreme form of negative criticism of Christianity and the Bible. He has nothing but scorn for Fundamentalism and regards the gospels as containing "a vast amount of material added to enhance the apparent supernatural power of Jesus" (*op. cit.*, p. 444). But his contempt for traditional Christianity is not a whit more outspoken than his disavowal of the evolution of religion. He points out the obstacles to this point of view that have developed in the field of anthropology and history. There has been a diffusion of religious thought rather than a straight-line development of religion through successive stages. In the official

history of particular groups it is found that one religion borrows from another. Some stages are skipped entirely, as when animistic tribes are converted to Christianity. Animism, totemism, ancestor-worship, polytheism, henotheism, and monotheism still serve as terms for the classification of the major types of religion; to the modern student they no longer represent the stages through which religions must pass in accordance with the law of evolution. "The religion of to-day is the product of a thousand different streams of cultural development in constant interaction rather than of any inner principle of growth. . . . It has been argued that most of the evolutionary schemes are based on pure assumption, and it is also true that many are contrary to the historical facts in their assumed sequence. . . . There is good reason to believe that some peoples of low material culture approach as closely to monotheism as does historic Christianity" (Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 145).

One of the earliest students of anthropology to break the spell which had held ethnologists in thrall since the publication of Tylor's *Primitive Culture* was Andrew Lang. His *Making of Religion* appeared some forty years ago, impressed many with the charm of its liquid style, but found only uncomprehending eyes so far as the mass of anthropologists was concerned. To-day, Lang experiences a revival of no mean proportion in the discussion of this topic. It was he who first directed the attention of students to the "high gods," the "creator gods," worshiped among peoples of low culture — the Australians, the Zulus, and others. "Over and over again Lang pointed out that there is no necessity that gods be developed from ghosts and that it is very difficult, if such development be assumed, to explain the highly moral qualities of a Supreme Being. How, he asks, could a righteous God have developed out of the ghost of a dirty and maleficent medicine man?" (p. 152). Not only that, but Lang refuses to credit the existence of high gods among savages to a process of borrowing from others. He assumed a very ancient belief in supreme beings which has degenerated under the influence of mythology and later animistic conceptions. Moreover, Lang comes close to the position in the first chapter in Romans when he speculates on the origin of idolatry. "It would be easy for a ghost cult to crowd out the God cult, for the ghosts in a way are more serviceable, less impartial, more subject to bribes, more approachable, and more likely to be served by cunning priests" (Kirkpatrick, *op. cit.*, p. 153).

It was P. Radlin who in his *Monotheism among Primitive Peoples* revived Lang's theory of an original monotheism. And others have gone so far as claiming for humanity a general stage of ancient culture "having as one characteristic the belief in a high god, dwelling in the sky, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent, moral, asexual,

worshiped not in temples, but by spontaneous, unstereotyped prayer" (*op. cit.*, p. 154).

Theories of religious progression fundamentally erred by not distinguishing between the different levels of culture found in the uncivilized world, the great difference in the cultural pattern and background and even of cultural advance and attainment. In characterizing the older ethnologists, Prof. Albert Muntsch (St. Louis University) says in his *Cultural Anthropology:* "Facts have been picked from here, there, and everywhere over the habitable globe and lumped together without rime or reason. . . . The lessons these criticisms suggest have been an integral and highly important factor in bringing about the cautious and rigidly objective attitude that at present characterizes the great bulk of cultural anthropologists. . . . Adventurous dogmatism has given place to an almost timid agnosticism" (p. 283). No longer will an ethnologist to-day follow the method of Spencer, who had a large number of assistants scour the literature of travel and anthropology for data of pagan practise and belief and then would classify these in his *Principles of Sociology* according to the viewpoints of evolutionary progress. Fraser's enormous collection *The Golden Bough,* in 12 volumes, and his *Folk-lore in the Old Testament* are almost worthless except as collections of source material, due to the same inherent error. Heavy execution has been wrought against these artificial constructs by the Kulturkreis-philosophers of Germany and Austria, among whom F. Graebner and B. Ankermann of the Berlin Ethnological Museum and W. Schmidt of Vienna are the chief representatives. The nucleus of the Kulturkreistheorie is that culture radiated in successive waves from definite centers, which probably all lie in Asia. These sequences of cultures are called "culture-cycles" or "culture-complexes," which here and there still remain intact, but which more often have been overlaid by subsequent waves and become confused with them. "The elements of each stream of culture must be determined and traced back to their point of departure. Each one of these streams of culture once formed a complete whole; each had its own forms of religion or mythology, of social organization" (Muntsch, *op. cit.*, p. 13). The special claim made for this method is that the inclusion of various cultural elements in compact groups or cycles is not based upon *a priori* "evolutionary" schemes, but upon careful examination of the data of culture. Other American writers, too, have found the principle of culture diffusion much more scientific than the old evolutionary viewpoint. J. H. Landman has contributed an essay to the *Michigan Law Review* in which he finds that also the development of human laws is the result of environment and of cultural diffusion rather than of growth from within. In fact, there has been no such thing as an "evolution of morality"; man has always acknowledged

the moral law, even as some form of religious belief is now recognized among all peoples. Muntsch declares that the belief in a Supreme Being — who may be a strictly theistic creator, a moral lawgiver, or a remote shadowy deity — is found among three-fourths of the world's "primitives" (*op. cit.*, p. 268).

As in biology, so in anthropology science has unlearned a great deal of what formerly passed as knowledge. Cultural facts are a bewildering tangle. So little has at the present time been explored that the pricipal workers in this field expect "many decades" to pass before definite theories can be formulated (Muntsch, *op. cit.*, p. 279). It is even being asserted now that "there is no anthropological evidence that in any sense militates against belief in primitive revelation" (*op. cit.*, p. 288).

We have no space to outline the contributions of the American school of historical ethnology represented by Franz Boas, R. H. Lowie, and many students of American Indian belief and ceremonial, except to say that this school investigates each primitive culture in its own restricted aspect of time and location and in its relation to surrounding cultures. Not from a dominating theory of evolutionary progress, but from working over the ethnographical collections of large museums the culture-area concept and its method was born. The change from the old to the new is lucidly set forth by Alexander Goldenweiser in a chapter contributed to *History and Prospects of the Social Sciences* (Knopf, 1925). A division of this chapter is entitled "The Downfall of Evolutionism." The author complains that the older school was satisfied with low standards of scholarship in authenticating the facts of pagan religions — depending in part on stray travelers, prejudiced historians, and government agents. He asks: "What good was there in such raw material? What was worse, the facts were secured by a sort of literary kidnaping. They were torn forcibly from their historic homes to figure in evolutionary dissertations as cultural waifs, deprived of their local associations and chronological antecedents. When thus severed from the soil of historic reality, facts could be made to speak any tongue, to serve any dogma. . . . Was not uniformity of cultural change one of the evolutionary tenets, the justice of which was first to be demonstrated by the comparative procedure? Thus, instead of providing proof of evolution the evolutionist was merely chasing his own tail" (*The Social Sciences*, p. 222). As opposed to this rigid scheme, "it was shown that both evidence and probability were against the assumption of a single unilinear development in social organization, religion, art, material culture. . . . Evidence was produced to show that the belief in a Superior Being was perhaps older than was once supposed. . . . Stages became so confused as to resemble a network rather than a ladder, and the prehistory of culture once more appeared as a set

of problems, many of them barely broached" (*op. cit.*, p. 222 f.). To add a final parallel with organic evolution, which now is faced with a gigantic problem in the face of emergences or mutations, — sudden appearances of new forms rather than gradual transformation, — also the comparative study of religions now recognizes "that relatively sudden change is at least as characteristic of the developmental process as is gradual transformation" (*op. cit.*, p. 228).

As in the study of plant and animal forms, so in the research devoted to comparative religion the evolutionary basis has been shattered, and the present task is concerned with patient registration and classification of facts, with a minimum of generalization and theory.

TH. GRAEBNER.

# Der „andere Martin“ und seine hohe Bedeutung für uns lutherische Theologen in Amerika.

## 1.

Es dürfte einem Kollegen wohl verziehen werden, sollte er in einer besonderen Nummer einer theologischen Zeitschrift wie der vorliegenden, die, durch die Umstände bedingt, ja vorwiegend persönlich eingestellt gedacht ist, auch etwa einen Artikel wesentlich subjektiven Inhalts bringen.

Jubelnummern theologischer Zeitschriften von der Art der gegenwärtigen werden ja solchen theologischen Lehrern gewidmet, die in ihrem hohen Beruf das seltene Glück erleben durften, im besonderen Sinn auf weitere Kreise einen tiefgreifenden Einfluß ausgeübt zu haben. Man wird es verstehen, wenn sich ein solcher theologischer Jubilar im vollen Bewußtsein des Ernstes der Stunde fragt: „Was habe ich eigentlich gewollt?“ Schon deshalb ist die Frage von großer Bedeutung, weil sie die notwendige Voraussetzung ist für die praktisch so wichtige Lebensendefrage: „Was habe ich mit meinem Theologisieren wirklich erreicht?“ Wohl in keinem andern Beruf ist die Frage „Was will ich?“ so wichtig wie in dem der christlichen Theologie, eben weil, wie sich Luther einmal ausgedrückt hat, die Theologie „in dem mathematischen Punkt steht“ (vgl. St. L. Ausg., XXII, 1477),*) das heißt, weil in der Theologie alles darauf ankommt, daß Theologie *Theologie* bleibt. (Vgl. Luther [VIII, 37]: „In der Theologie gilt weder hören noch sehen, sondern das ist der Anfang allein, daß man höre und glaube dem Wort Gottes.“)

„Was habe ich gewollt?“ fragt sich der das Katheder verlassende Meister, wenn seine Laufbahn zu Ende gekommen sein sollte. „Was will ich?“ fragt sich ebenso ernst der theologische Schüler, der dem Meister auf der Spur nachgeht. „Was wollen wir?“ so fragen wir uns gewiß alle, auf denen die Würde wie die Bürde einer überall ankämpfenden Kirche liegt — Pastoren, Dozenten, Redakteure kirchlicher Zeitungen, Leitende wie Folgende —, ein jeder mit wohl anderer Applikation, aber auch wieder aus derselben inneren Notwendigkeit heraus und mit demselben nach oben gerichteten Gebetsblick.

## 2.

Die *objektive* Beantwortung dieser Frage ist allerdings nicht gerade schwierig, denn der wahrhaft lutherische Theolog, mag er nun am Lehrpult oder auf der Kanzel oder auch am Schreibtisch seiner Zeitung wirken, will doch nur eins: das nämlich, was Paulus als Theolog so trefflich zum Ausdruck bringt, wenn er sich und seine theologischen Kollegen ὑπηρέτας Χριστοῦ καὶ οἰκονόμους μυστηρίων θεοῦ nennt, 1 Kor. 4, 1. Als ministri Christi et oeconomi mysteriorum Dei fühlen

*) Alle Zitate nach der St. Louiser Lutherausgabe.

sich doch alle aufrichtigen, bekenntnistreuen lutherischen Theologen, und sie wollen doch auch alle durch Gottes Gnade in den Schranken der in der Schrift gegebenen Instruktionen für „Christusdiener“ und „Gottes-Geheimnisse-Haushalter“ voll und ganz bleiben. Hat Luther einmal gesagt: „Christus ist die Beweisung der Theologen“ (vgl. XXII, 1982), so hat er mit diesem bündigen, gottseligen Schlagwort auch das Arbeitsprogramm des lutherischen Theologen präzisiert. Schwierigkeit findet sich daher an diesem Punkt nicht.

Schwierigkeit schafft aber die Frage, wenn man sie *subjektiv* angeht, das heißt, wenn sich der Theolog angesichts seiner pekuliären Umgebung fragt: „Wie werde ich persönlich meiner Aufgabe unter den gegebenen Umständen gerecht?“ Denn nicht, was der Theolog an sich ist, sondern was er seiner Zeit sein muß, und dies als loyaler Schrifttheolog, damit hat er sich recht abzufinden, will er anders am Ende seiner theologischen Laufbahn befriedigt auf seine beendigte Arbeit als Kirchenlehrer zurückblicken.

Der große Luther mit seiner zielbewußten, sicheren, geschickten Applikation des ewigen und ewig zeitgemäßen Gotteswort auf die sich unaufhörlich ändernden Zeitumstände bleibt auch an diesem Punkt unser eigentliches Theologenideal. Wollen wir unserer Zeit das Rechte werden, so müssen wir daher rechte Lutherschüler bleiben. Damit meinen wir: Wir dürfen uns nicht etwa, um nur eins hervorzuheben, mit einem schwankenden, unionistischen Melanchthonismus zufrieden geben; wir müssen im vollsten Sinn des Wortes „Zurück zu Luther!“ unserer Mitwelt das werden und sein, was Luther seinerzeit so segensreich seinen Mitmenschen auf Grund des Wortes Gottes war, müssen, um genauer zu reden, die lautere Reformation Luthers mit ihrer ganzen Lehre und Praxis auf unsere reformationsbedürftige Zeit übertragen. Wir sind nur Übermittler, nicht Neumacher. Das bekannte, leider auch oft verspottete Quo propior Luthero, eo melior theologus findet auch hier seine nötige Anwendung. Unsere Parole sei: Mit Luther für Gottes Wort!

Immerhin aber bleibt bei aller Ähnlichkeit der Aufgabe Luthers mit der unsrigen eine wesentliche Ungleichartigkeit zwischen seinem vorzüglichen *Reformator*beruf und unserm bescheideneren *Konservator*beruf. Wir wenden uns daher (indem wir uns aber dabei doch nicht von Luther eigentlich abwenden) gerne auch andern Theologen zu, die uns in ihrer praktischen Betätigung als Theologen doch näher stehen als der *erste* große Martin.

Unter diesen findet sich an erster Stelle der *andere* große Martin, Martin Chemnitz, Prediger, Dozent, Schriftsteller, „der erste große Theolog, den die Reformation produziert hat“, an dessen Leben und Wirken uns heuer der 350. Jahrestag seines seligen Abschiedes wieder gemahnt. Hier eine genauere oder eingehendere Lebensbeschreibung über Chemnitz offerieren zu wollen, verbietet uns schon die vorge-

schriebene Raumkürze. Wer Genaueres über diesen gewaltigen Gottesmann wissen will, kann sich andernorts leicht über ihn informieren. Hier wollen wir nur auf einige Punkte aufmerksam machen, die sich aus des andern Martin so treuer Durchführung seines hohen Theologenberufs für uns als seine geistlichen Söhne und unsere Aufgabe als lutherische Theologen ergeben, die uns aber auch bei der so wichtigen Frage „Was wollen wir als Theologen hier in Amerika?“ treffliche Winke an die Hand geben.

### 3.

Zunächst dürfte vielleicht gesagt werden, daß Chemnitz zu einer Zeit lebte und wirkte, mit der die gegenwärtige — wir denken hier vorwiegend an die früheren Lehrkämpfe und die Zersplitterung der lutherischen Kirche in den Vereinigten Staaten — so manches gemeinsam hat. Als Chemnitz am 9. November 1522 zu Treuenbrietzen im Brandenburgischen geboren wurde, da hatte Luther seine gewaltige Reformationsaufgabe soeben erst begonnen. Nur fünf Jahre waren verflossen, seitdem der kühne Reformator seine durchgreifenden Thesen veröffentlicht hatte. Als aber Chemnitz am 8. April 1586 in Braunschweig starb, da ruhte Luther schon seine vierzig Jahre (etwas weniger als die Spanne Zeit zwischen dem Todesjahr Walthers [1887] und dem gegenwärtigen Jahr) im Grab (Chemnitz gehörte somit zu dem ersten Theologengeschlecht nach der Reformation). Und viel, viel hatte sich inzwischen zugetragen: Die Lutherischen waren von den Römischen besiegt worden (Mühlberg, 1547) und waren wiederum über die Römischen Sieger geworden (Passau und Augsburg, 1552, 1555). Der große dreißigjährige Theologenkrieg (1547—1577, Augsburger Interim, Annahme der Konkordienformel) war längst vorüber. Die lutherische Kirche war aufs betrübendste gespalten und aufs wunderbarste wieder geheilt worden, und dies letztere ganz im Sinn Luthers, mit Beseitigung aller melanchthonischen Irrelemente. Niedergang, Aufgang; Schlacht, Sieg. Und dieser großartige Sieg gesunden Luthertums über Papismus, Calvinismus, Enthusiasmus aller Art usw. war zum großen Teil die Errungenschaft des „andern Martin“. Und eine gewaltige Errungenschaft war es! Luthers Wirken war, wie man ja so vielfach betont hat, Schöpfungswirken; das des andern Martin war Konservationswirken. Aber weniger schwierig war das letztere nicht als das erstere. Luther hat die Bahn gebrochen; aber Chemnitz mußte die Bahn neu öffnen, mußte sie sichern für die Jahrhunderte, die auf Luther gefolgt sind. Die gesicherte Existenz einer treulutherischen Kirche während all dieser nachlutherschen Jahrhunderte verdanken wir hauptsächlich der Konkordienformel. Denken wir aber an die Konkordienformel, so müssen wir auch an Martin Chemnitz denken, ohne den es, menschlich geredet, keine Konkordienformel in solcher theologischen Vollkommenheit, wie sie jetzt vor uns liegt, hätte geben können.

Mit dem Gesagten sollen allerdings die Verdienste der andern eifrigen und treuen Mitarbeiter an dem gesegneten Eintrachtsunternehmen nicht geschmälert werden. Einen goldenen Ehrenkranz verdient hier vor allem der Tübinger Kanzler Jakob Andreä, der eigentliche „Vater der Konkordienformel“, der nicht nur die ersten Beiträge zu diesem gewaltigen Bekenntnis geliefert hat (vgl seinen „Entwurf aus fünf Artikeln zur Wiederherstellung der Eintracht in der lutherischen Kirche“, 1568; seine „Sechs Predigten von den Spaltungen in der evangelischen Kirche“, 1573, usw.), sondern auch bis zuletzt durchgehalten hat, um die Eintrachtsformel zur Befriedigung aller recht passend und annehmbar zu gestalten (vgl. seine praktischen Bemühungen um die Wiederherstellung der Eintracht, seine vielen Reisen, seine riesige Geduld, seine stete demütige, christliche Willigkeit, immer wieder nachzugeben und sein eigenes Ich in den Hintergrund zu rücken, besonders auch seine Mitarbeit auf dem dritten Konvent zu Bergen, 19. bis 28. Mai 1577). Vergessen dürfen wir hier auch nicht den edlen, bei allen Mängeln und Schwankungen doch herzenstreuen Nikolaus Selnecker, den doctorem clarissimum, testamenti Christi assertorem constantissimum, der schließlich doch auch nur eins wollte: die allseitige Beibehaltung des lauteren Evangeliums, des teuren Erbes der Reformation. Hervorragend im Werk der lutherischen Vereinigung auf Grund der Schrift war ferner der Kurfürst August von Sachsen, der, nachdem er das Lügengewebe des Kryptocalvinismus erkannt hatte, mit wahrem Feuereifer auf die Abschaffung der Irrlehren und auf die Einigung der gespalteten lutherischen Kirche hinarbeitete. Und schließlich verhielten sich doch auch solche Männer wie Musculus, Körner, Chyträus usw. als Vereinigungstheologen nicht pure passive, sondern lieferten Originelles und Wichtiges zur rechten Darlegung der Lehre und so zu dem mit vieler Mühe erreichten Vereinigungswerk. So einseitig und verkehrt es wäre, würde man bei der Darlegung der Reformation nur Luther, nicht aber seine Mitarbeiter berücksichtigen, so einseitig und verkehrt wäre es auch, wollte man in der schweren Periode nach Luther, wo es galt, das Reformationserbe zu erhalten, nur Chemnitz, nicht aber seinen verdienstvollen Kollegen die gebührende Ehre geben. Gewiß, Chemnitz war einer aus vielen. Und doch auch wieder, unter den vielen war Chemnitz auch der eine. Nur einem lutherischen Theologen der damaligen Zeit konnte der römische Gegner die Ehrung zukommen lassen, die in dem bekannten Vers liegt: Si Martinus non fuisset, Martinus vix stetisset. „Wär' nicht der andere Martin gewesen, der erstere hätte kaum Bestand gehabt.“

## 4.

Aber was war es nun, was Chemnitz unter den vielen zu dem einen machte? Was zeichnete ihn vor andern aus? Was wollte dieser „erste große Theolog, den die Reformation produziert hat“?

Worin finden wir bei ihm seine hohe Bedeutung auch jetzt noch für uns lutherische Theologen in Amerika?

Eins ist gewiß: Chemnitz hat nie eigentlich Theolog noch als solcher Konservator der lutherischen Theologie werden wollen. Selbst noch im Jahr 1545 fesselten ihn in Wittenberg die philosophischen und astrologischen Studien so sehr, daß er darüber alles andere versäumte, selbst Luthers noch immer gefeierte Vorträge. Das hat er allerdings nachher vielfach beklagt; aber daß dem dreiundzwanzigjährigen Studiosus, der doch schon früher Neigung und Lust zum Studium der Theologie im hohen Maß gezeigt hatte, jetzt die Theologie gleichsam nicht im Herzen wie mit heißer Flamme brannte, nimmt uns doch wunder. Erst mit dem Jahr 1554, als er, zweiunddreißig Jahre alt, auf Melanchthons Rat über dessen Loci Communes Vorlesungen hielt, war sein völliges Verbleiben bei der Theologie entschieden. Woran lag das wohl? Es mangelte Chemnitz natürlich durchaus nicht an der nötigen Lernbegierde, auch nicht an dem nötigen Ingenium für das Studium der Systematik. Das Zeug zu einem tüchtigen Theologen hatte er gewiß, und er war sich dessen auch bewußt. Als im Jahr 1553 in Preußen der Osiandersche Lehrstreit über die Rechtfertigung ausgebrochen war und Chemnitz in diesem Kampf nach dem Urteil des Herzogs Albrecht den kürzeren gezogen hatte, da machte er sich auf, verließ das ihm verleidete Land und zog sich nach Wittenberg zurück. Dort wurde er Dozent der Dogmatik, gab aber gleich im nächsten Jahr der Universität wieder den Abschied, trotzdem er als theologischer Lehrer in Wittenberg gefeiert wurde, und nahm die bescheidene Stelle als Koadjutor in Braunschweig an. Erklärt werden kann dies alles nur durch die tiefe christliche Demut dieses so reich begabten Mannes, der persönlich nichts gelten wollte, auch nichts als Theolog, sondern für sich nur die Stille eines kleinen gesegneten Kreises praktischer Predigerwirksamkeit suchte. Chemnitz war kein Streber, eher litt er an einem, wie man es heutzutage gern, aber oft unpassend nennt, inferiority complex. Die aufrichtige christliche Demut des andern Martin, die er auch noch später in seiner ganzen theologischen Wirksamkeit ununterbrochen an den Tag legte, eine Demut, die ihn oft mit wahrem Entsetzen erfüllte, er möchte etwas sein wollen — gerade darin finden wir die erste seiner mannigfaltigen Theologentugenden, die ihn noch heute uns amerikanischen lutherischen Theologen, im Leben wie im Amt, so recht zum Vorbild machen. Luthers ernste Vermahnung in seiner theologischen Methodologie Deus superbis resistit, humilibus autem dat gratiam hat Chemnitz gründlich erfaßt und auf sich angewandt. Wie Luther, so ist auch Chemnitz in seiner aufrichtigen Christendemut allen lutherischen Theologen zum leuchtenden Exempel geworden. In seiner Vita Martini Chemnicii urteilt Preuß über den andern Martin: „Ingenio erat mitis et placidus, natura hilaris et affabilis, vultu gravis et compositus.

A fastu et ambitione alienissimus. . . . Erat igitur et semper manebat tantis in donis praecipua Chemnicii virtus humilitas animi.“

Mit seiner großen, bleibenden Demut verband aber Chemnitz in seinem vom Heiligen Geist göttlich hergerichteten Theologencharakter eine seltene theologische Gründlichkeit, die ihn aller Oberflächlichkeit abhold sein ließ. Diese seltene Gründlichkeit zeigte er schon im Jahr 1550, als er seines Amtes als Privatbibliothekar der herzoglichen Büchersammlung in Königsberg wartete. Hier las er drei Jahre lang alle Schätze alten und neuen Datums, welche die nicht gerade kleine Bibliothek aufzuweisen hatte, vor allem aber die Schrift selber, dann aber auch alle dort vorhandenen Auslegungen der Schrift, ferner die Werke der Kirchenväter, der besseren Lehrer des Mittelalters und der noch bedeutend besseren Lehrer seiner eigenen Zeit usw. Chemnitz war als Theolog eigentlich ein self-made man; aber in diesem einzigartigen self-made man zeigte sich nichts Halbes, nichts Un- oder auch nur Halbverdautes, nichts an der Oberfläche Schwimmendes. Chemnitz arbeitete immer gründlich, immer gediegen, immer tiefgrabend. Diese Gründlichkeit im Studium zeigte sich dann auch nach außen in seinem gründlichen Schriftstellertum. Viel allerdings hat eigentlich Chemnitz nicht geschrieben, wenigstens nicht im Vergleich mit den vielen Produktionen eines Flacius, eines Selnecker, gar nicht zu sagen eines Luther. Aber was Chemnitz der Nachwelt an theologischen Schriften hinterlassen hat, trägt alles den Charakter reifer, tiefgehender Gründlichkeit, ganz besonders jene Schriften, bei denen es sich um die Erhaltung der reinen Evangeliumslehre gegen römische, calvinistische und enthusiastische Irrlehre handelt. Wir denken hier nur an sein bekanntes Examen Concilii Tridentini (1565—1573), ohne Zweifel das gediegenste und wertvollste Werk dieses einsichtsvollen, kritisch an erster Stelle stehenden lutherischen Theologen; an seine noch immer berühmte und unübertroffene Monographie De Duabus in Christo Naturis (1570), die so viel dazu beigetragen hat, daß die lutherische dogmatische Terminologie an diesem Punkt sich klärte und sicherte, die aber zugleich auch dem Calvinismus ein für allemal alle Argumente für seine Verneinung der communio naturarum, der communicatio idiomatum und vor allem des genus maiestaticum raubte, ein nach Selneckers Urteil „der Unsterblichkeit würdiges und nur der satanischen Rotte verhaßtes Buch“. Zu erwähnen ist hier gerade auch die Konkordienformel, besonders die manchmal fast zu gründliche Solida Declaratio, in der just die Lehren entschieden und ins rechte Licht gerückt werden, die für unsern Christenglauben und unser Christenleben von erster Bedeutung sind. Eine oft übersehene Schrift, an der Chemnitz mit die Hauptarbeit getan hat, ist der der Concordia gewöhnlich beigegebene Catalogus Testimoniorum, eine höchst wertvolle Bestätigung dessen, was Artikel VIII über Christi Person, vor allem über das genus maiestaticum lehrt. Wie zeichnet sich nicht auch dieser Katalog durch Tiefe und Gründlichkeit aus! Doch wir

müssen von dem Gegenstand abbrechen. Die hohe Bedeutung des andern Martin liegt, wie gesagt, für uns gerade auch in seiner theologisch-wissenschaftlichen Gründlichkeit, womit er die Lehren der Reformation dargelegt, erläutert und verteidigt hat. Hier finden wir ein Vorbild, dem wir schier gar nicht genug nachdenken können.

Dazu gesellt sich als drittes die nüchterne Mäßigkeit des andern Martin in seinem Kampf mit dem Gegner. Was die Theologen der damaligen Zeit fast alle charakterisiert, ist eine gewisse tadelnswerte Hastigkeit, eine oft geradezu krankhafte Hysterie, eine unnötige theologische Überstürzung. Das läßt sich entschuldigen an diesen wahrhaft zelotischen Männern, denen bei dem theologischen Chaos, worin sich die lutherische Kirche befand, das Herz vor Weh blutete; wir meinen vor allem die Gnesiolutheraner, allen voran den gelehrten, eifrigen, unermüdlichen Flacius, der trotz seiner bedauernswerten Entgleisung in der Doktrin von der Erbsünde und trotz seiner sonstigen dogmatischen Schrullen nach Luther der eifrigste Vorkämpfer für das sola gratia war. Sie waren aufrichtig, meinten es herzlich gut, wollten das Rechte, standen im heißen Kampf mit zum Teil hypokritischen, verlogenen Subjekten. Aber die große Hast in ihrem Wirken, ihre oftmalige Überstürzung, das manchmal fast fieberhafte, maßlose Drängen vorwärts, wo Geduld not tat, das nutzlose Versuchen, „etwas machen zu wollen“, wo die Reife noch nicht da war, kurz, die Überspannung der damaligen Orthodoxie mit ihrem oftmaligen Streichen-in-die-Luft — welch gewaltigen Schaden hat das nicht alles damals angerichtet! Wie hat das nicht die Eintracht, die man doch im Auge hatte, geradezu gefährdet! Dem andern Martin muß es als Verdienst angerechnet werden, daß er in dieser Zeit großer Unruhe ruhig blieb und meisterhaft mäßig in seiner Beurteilung der Sachlage, um dann zur rechten Zeit gerade das zu erreichen, was den Gnesiolutheranern versagt war, eben weil sie zu sehr Draufgänger waren. Wir möchten diese nüchterne Mäßigkeit unter den trefflichen Tugenden des andern Martin fast an erster Stelle rühmen; so wichtig ist sie für die Rettung der Kirche in der damaligen Zeit geworden. Sehr richtig urteilt Meusel in seinem „Kirchlichen Handlexikon“ über Chemnitz: „Dabei zeichnet sich seine Polemik vorteilhaft aus durch die besonnene und gründliche Untersuchung des eigentlichen Standes der Streitfrage und durch das organische Hervorwachsen der Entscheidung aus der Heiligen Schrift.“ Man muß Meusel in diesem Urteil recht geben. Gerade daß sich bei Chemnitz Besonnenheit und Sachlichkeit mit wahrer Gründlichkeit so wunderbar paarten, das machte ihn zu einem so mächtigen Gegner der mannigfaltigen Irrlehre. Auch hierin ist Chemnitz für uns Vorbild und Exempel.

Aber eben weil Chemnitz so nüchtern mäßig war, konnte er auch so heldenmäßig feststehen und festhalten wie fast kein anderer seiner Zeit. Und hiermit kämen wir zum vierten, worin uns Chemnitz als leuchtendes Beispiel noch heute wichtig sein muß. Ja besonders hier.

Der andere Martin war kein Nachgeber in der Lehre, ebensowenig wie dies der erste war. Wie bei Luther, so findet sich auch bei dem „größten Schüler Luthers“ ein trutziges Festhalten an der Schriftwahrheit, eine kühne, verwegene Unbeweglichkeit, ein Nichtwanken im Kampf — Dinge, die man selbst bei manchen Gnesiolutheranern vermißt. Lange Zeit nach Luthers Tod hielt sich Chemnitz vom Kampf zurück, nicht als purer Beobachter, sondern sich durch ruhige Überlegung für den Kampf recht zu rüsten, um dann aber desto fester zur Wahrheit zu halten, als die Stunde gekommen war, wo es hieß, zur Attacke überzugehen. Bücher wie sein Examen, sein De Duabus Naturis, seine Repetitio Sanae Doctrinae und vor allem auch die Konkordienformel selbst haben nicht etwas Akzidentelles, sondern das Wesentliche, das Fundamentbildende der Reformation, das Formalprinzip wie das Materialprinzip der ganzen reformatorischen Bewegung, vor dem Untergang gerettet. Es ging hier alles ums Herz der Reformation. Das ist um so mehr zu beachten, weil sich in diesen Schriften nichts falsch Gleißendes, nichts verkehrt Prunkendes, nichts farbenschillernd ins Auge Fallendes, nichts für den Augenblick Gemachtes, sondern nur immer so etwas Tiefes, Fertiges, Gediegenes, wahrhaft Großartiges, aber in so schlichter, ruhiger, vollendeter Form findet, daß man schier oft die Vollkommenheit gerade wegen der Vollkommenheit übersieht. Welch wichtiges Vorbild für unsere Zeit, wo man so häufig das große Maul von einem Eselsohr bis zum andern aufreißt, um mit Nichtigkeiten, Äußerlichkeiten, Gemachtem und Gemaltem die Zuhörer zu betören, für die man nichts Ordentliches, nichts Wahres, nichts Belehrendes mehr hat! Chemnitz' Schriften gefallen dem Oberflächlichen nicht; sie sind auch eigentlich nie recht populär geworden, selbst da nicht, wo man dies hätte erwarten dürfen. Mit seinen Schriften hat Chemnitz nicht dem theologischen Plebs gefallen, sondern nur den besten Geistern seiner Zeit genug getan. Damit aber hat er auch gelebt für alle Zeiten. Chemnitz gebührt der große Ruhm, das Erbe Luthers recht im Grund erfaßt und es treu bewahrt der Nachwelt meisterhaft übermittelt zu haben. Von der Wahrheit des Gesagten muß sich jeder überzeugen, der ehrlich die Dogmengeschichte studiert.

Und noch eins. Die ganze theologische Betätigung des andern großen Martin trägt den Charakter rein praktischer Einstellung. Chemnitz blieb die ganze Theologie wirklich voll und ganz habitus practicus. Er hätte leicht auf irrige Bahnen kommen können, eben weil er unter Melanchthon stand. Er hätte Scholastiker werden können, wie es sein scholastischer Lehrer war, besonders als er bewogen wurde, über dessen Loci zu lesen. Aber über die Loci zu lesen, war für Chemnitz eine Arbeit sauren Schweißes. Er litt es nicht lange, trotzdem die Frequenz der Zuhörer gewaltig war. Es zog ihn nach Braunschweig, wo er in seinem Hirtenamt seine Theologie wirklich zu praktischer Applikation bringen konnte. Es mag einen wundernehmen,

warum wohl Chemnitz' Loci Theologici so verhältnismäßig mager geblieben sind, ja warum Chemnitz nicht selbst dies Werk für den Druck vorbereitet hat. Offenbar maß er diesem Werk nicht große Wichtigkeit bei. Und warum wohl nicht? Liegt nicht der Grund wahrscheinlich gerade darin, daß sich Chemnitz nie recht als Scholastiker fühlte, daß es ihm beim Theologisieren doch weit höher ging, als einfach loci klarzustellen, daß es ihn dazu trieb, Seelen für Christum zu gewinnen, kurz, daß ihm die Theologie nur praktisch genommen wichtig war? Auch hierin ähnelt der zweite große Martin dem ersten. Der teuerste Bibelspruch war Chemnitz das glaubenswarme Paulusbekenntnis „Cum Christo crucifixus sum; vivo autem non amplius ego, sed vivit in me Christus“, Gal. 2, 20. Aus dem in ihm lebenden und webenden Christus heraus hat Chemnitz Theologie getrieben als habitus practicus θεόδοτος, immer praktisch, immer demütig, immer gründlich, immer mäßig-nüchtern, immer aber auch unbeweglich fest, um aller Welt, groß wie klein, einfach und schlicht, aber dennoch mächtig überzeugend das große „In fide vivo, quae est in Filium Dei, qui dilexit me et tradidit se ipsum pro me“ ins Herz zu schreiben. Als Theolog war Chemnitz nur Christuszeuge, Evangeliumszeuge, Schriftzeuge, und er wollte auch gar nichts anderes sein. Rein praktisch in seinem Theologisieren war der erste große Martin, und so war es auch der zweite große Martin. Durch diese theologisch rein praktisch eingestellten Männer ist es zur Reformation gekommen und ist die Reformation dem Volk Gottes erhalten geblieben. Beide bewegte nur *ein* Gedanke, der große, mächtige Heilsgedanke „Vivit in me Christus“. Luther hat einmal gesagt: „Des Paulus Theologie, aufs kürzeste zusammengefaßt, ist diese: Christum unter den Heiden predigen“ (IX, 107). Das war auch Luthers ganze Theologie, aufs kürzeste zusammengefaßt; und das war auch Chemnitz' ganze Theologie: Christum predigen, und zwar den Christus, der in ihm lebte.

## 5.

Und so wird uns Chemnitz (wie Luther) ganz großartig zum leuchtenden Vorbild. So beantwortet er uns auch durch sein ganzes theologisches Wirken die bedeutungsvolle Frage „Was will ich als Theolog?“ Soll aus der lutherischen Kirche in Amerika etwas Rechtes werden, so müssen wir, die wir Theologen sind, im Leben demütig, im Lehren gründlich, im Urteilen nüchtern-mäßig, in der Doktrin unbeweglich fest, in unserm ganzen Theologisieren praktisch sein; so muß unsere ganze Theologie nur das ehrliche Zeugnis von dem in uns wohnenden Christus sein. Unsere ganze Theologie, aufs kürzeste zusammengefaßt, muß sein: Christum unter den Heiden predigen! Deswegen muß uns die ganze Doktrin Christi über alles teuer, der Unionismus über alles verhaßt und jeder falsche Prophet qua solcher, der Christi Wort verdreht (mag er dies auch ganz subtil tun), ein

Satan ſein, den wir aus dem tiefſten Herzen haſſen; denn, wie Luther ſo trefflich ſagt, „in der Lehre ſtößt ein kleiner Irrtum die ganze Lehre um. Die Lehre iſt nicht unſer, ſondern Gottes; darum können wir kein Tüttelchen derſelben nachlaſſen“. (Vgl. IX, 644.)

## 6.

Was wollen wir? Doch gewiß dieſes, im beſcheidenen Maß unſerer Zeit durch Gottes Gnade das werden, was Luther, was Chemnitz, was Walther ſeiner Zeit geworden iſt. Zweierlei liegt uns lutheriſchen Theologen im Land ob: bauen und heilen. Bauen, weiterbauen, nämlich die Mauern Zions, daheim wie draußen, und zwar nicht durch Menſchenwort, ſondern durch Chriſti purlauteres Wort, wie es uns die Reformation neu gebracht, wie es uns die Konkordienformel neu dargelegt hat. Wir müſſen „Chriſtum unter den Heiden predigen“. Und dazu ferner dann die Riſſe heilen, die Riſſe gerade auch im lutheriſchen Zion. Es iſt dieſes Doppelte ein ganz gehöriges Stück Theologenarbeit; aber zu ſchwer iſt es wahrlich nicht. Es läßt ſich machen. Was man damals zwiſchen 1547 und 1577 an dieſem Punkt geleiſtet hat, war doch noch tauſendfach ſchwerer, als was uns zu tun geboten iſt. Aber es iſt damals gelungen, den Vätern gelungen, Chemnitz gelungen. Und es iſt dieſen heiligen Gottesleuten gelungen, weil ſie zum Wort hielten — in großer Demut, in meiſterhafter Gründlichkeit, in edler Mäßigkeit im Urteil über die Sachlage, in unbeweglicher Feſtigkeit, in der Erkenntnis des einen, was not tut, in dem, daß ſie Chriſtum unter den Heiden predigten. Sie waren Chriſten zuerſt und Theologen hernach, eben weil ein Chriſt aus ſeinem Glauben heraus notgedrungen Theologie treiben muß. So iſt Chemnitz das geworden, was er ſeiner Zeit war und uns noch heute iſt: ein Chriſtenvorbild, ein Theologenvorbild, wie es uns auch der Heilige Geiſt durch Paulus gebietet zu ſein, 1 Tim. 4, 12; Tit. 2, 7 uſw. So werden auch wir, ein jeder an ſeinem Teil, ein alter Martinus, ein rechter lutheriſcher Theolog nach dem Herzen Gottes.

Geſegnet jeder Theolog, der am Abend ſeines theologiſchen Werktags ſagen kann: „Ja, gerade das habe ich gewollt. Vivit in me Christus. Denn das allein iſt Anfang, Mittel und Ende der ganzen chriſtlichen Theologie. Aber, was habe ich damit erreicht? Nun, das überlaſſen wir dem, deſſen Kraft immer in den Schwachen mächtig iſt.“

J. T. Müller.

# Doctrinal Preaching.

"In a restless nation and agitated times, in these days of somewhat bustling religious activity, there has come to be too little of real doctrinal preaching." This description of conditions and the complaint concerning too little doctrinal preaching, all of which so well fits our own time, was not written by one of our contemporaries, but is a quotation from the book *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons,* by Broadus, page 77, published in 1870. Turning to Walther's *Pastoraltheologie,* published in 1872, we find that Dr. Walther made a similar complaint. He says: "Although a sermon may be filled with words of admonition, rebuke, and consolation, yet, if that sermon contains no doctrine, it is an empty and a poor sermon, all of its admonitions, rebukes, and consolations floating in the air. And no one knows how many preachers are guilty and how much they sin in this respect." Must we not also to-day complain that doctrinal preaching is being neglected? Experience teaches that in the very measure in which the teaching of Bible doctrine has been eliminated from the preaching of the Church, in that measure has the Church lacked virility and power.

## I.

What is doctrinal preaching? Some will readily answer, The preaching of doctrine. The answer is correct, but not sufficient. Such statements as "Christ died for our sins" or "We are saved by grace through faith" are doctrinal statements, and yet a sermon that has such statements merely interwoven is not yet a doctrinal sermon. A doctrinal sermon calls for the thorough exposition of some Biblical doctrine or phase of that doctrine. Moreover, doctrinal preaching calls for the preaching of all the doctrines of Scripture.

Of course, the chief doctrines must be preached first and more frequently, such as the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, the purpose and use of the Scriptures, the atonement, justification by faith, conversion, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, the person and the work of the Holy Spirit, good works as the evidence of faith, the Christian Church, the Christian ministry, false prophets, the trials and sufferings of a Christian, the resurrection, the Judgment, eternal life. But also such doctrines should be preached as the creation and preservation of the world, the angels, predestination, the giving and taking of offense, brotherly remonstrance, marriage, the Christian training of children, the divine institution of civil government, the relation of master and servant, Christian liberty, adiophora, sinful amusements, the oath, the dangers of riches, the mysterious ways of God in the life of a Christian, etc. A Christian preacher should be able to say with Paul, Acts 20, 20. 26. 27, "I kept back nothing that

was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly and from house to house. . . . Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

II.

From the viewpoint of the purpose of the sermon we may classify sermons as doctrinal, pastoral, and hortatory. The distinction we make is not that some sermons contain doctrine and others do not. Every sermon must contain both doctrine and the application of doctrine. Doctrine without application does not serve its purpose; and application of doctrine cannot be made without a knowledge of the doctrine. But while the pastoral sermon stresses particularly the *application* of doctrine to the Christian life, as does also the hortatory sermon, the doctrinal sermon is *mainly* an *exposition* of some Scriptural doctrine or, usually, of a certain phase of some doctrine. The purpose of the doctrinal sermon is fully to acquaint the hearers with the doctrines of the Scriptures, or, as we say, to indoctrinate them. The doctrinal sermon offers a popular course in dogmatics.

The importance of a thorough indoctrination and, therefore, of the preaching of doctrinal sermons is readily understood and appreciated when it is borne in mind that doctrine constitutes the basic part of Scripture. The fivefold use of Scripture is given in 2 Tim. 3, 16: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," and Rom. 15, 4: "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." We therefore, according to the Latinized Greek terminology speak of the *usus didascalicus, elenchticus, paedeuticus, epanorthoticus,* and *paracleticus.* The following outline will help both the understanding and the memory: —

**The Use of Scripture —**

Doctrine { Teaches *true* doctrine. / Refutes *false* doctrine. } Life { Corrects *sinful* life. / Encourages *godly* life. / Comforts *in troubles* of life. }

The *usus didascalicus* is not only mentioned first by Paul, but *is basic for all the other* uses of Scripture. False doctrine can be refuted only on the basis of the true doctrine; a sinful life can be corrected and a godly life encouraged only on the basis of the doctrines of sin and of good works; and comfort can be dispensed only on the basis of whatever doctrine comes into consideration in a specific case. Timothy is told to "preach the Word," especially "sound doctrine," 2 Tim. 4, 2. 3. Likewise Titus is told "to speak the things which become sound doctrine," Titus 2, 1. Read also Heb. 5, 12; 6, 2;

2 John 9—11; Gal. 1, 6—12. The major part of Paul's Epistle to the Romans consists of doctrine, chapters 1—11. Compare also the preaching recorded in the Book of Acts.

Only by the preaching of doctrine can a congregation be kept in good spiritual condition. Bible doctrine is the substantial spiritual food that a Christian needs for his spiritual welfare, sustaining and strengthening his faith and giving him power to resist sin and live a life that is pleasing to God. Every successful preacher has been a preacher of doctrine. It does not speak well for a preacher when the members of his congregation in the course of years still are babes in doctrine and have not doctrinally advanced to men of full age, Heb. 5, 12—14.

The importance of doctrinal preaching ought to be so self-evident to a Christian preacher as to need no further elaboration. But serious mistakes are made, and many fruitless admonitions, exhortations, and warnings are given because the fact is ignored that for all its teaching, of whatever kind it may be, the Church needs the pure doctrine of the Scriptures as the basis; otherwise, as Walther says, the warnings and admonitions will "float in the air." Many admonitions to do good works do not produce such because the preacher has forgotten that justifying faith is the root of all true morality. It is to the doctrine of justification by faith that the preacher must ever again revert if he would successfully encourage his people to avoid sin and lead a godly life.

By way of illustration: In spite of the present economic condition, a large proportion of our church-members could give the little money that is needed for the work of the Church, but many are not doing so. Pastors complain that their preaching fails to open the purse-strings of their people, although, so the preachers tell us, they are telling their people of the needs of the Church and are pleading with them to supply those needs. We shall do well to examine our preaching in the light of that of Paul. When Paul encouraged the Corinthians to make liberal contributions, he said: "Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others and to prove the sincerity of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor that ye through His poverty might be rich," 2 Cor. 8, 7—9. Paul urged Christian giving on the basis of the doctrine of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and encouraged the Corinthians by the giving of their gifts to show the sincerity of their love to their Savior. A Christian whose heart is filled with the love of Christ will not spend his money for pleasure and luxuries and then plead poverty when he is asked to give to

the Lord, Hag. 1, 2—5; Mal. 3, 8. Because the very poor Macedonians had first given themselves to the Lord, therefore they gave their money "to their power and beyond their power," 2 Cor. 8, 1—5. When the line of demarcation between church-members and the people of this world is in many cases hard to detect; when our church-members set their affections upon the things of this earth instead of on the things above; when our church-members have little knowledge of the affairs of the kingdom of God and take little interest in them; when our church-members are attracted more by the glories of the world than by the glory of Christ; when all this is true, we need not be surprised that such church-members spend many a dollar on things other than the necessities of life — personal conveniences, expensive dress and entertainment, pleasure and amusements, and the like, Hag. 1, 2—4, while at the same time they permit their Church and their Savior to go begging for the very few dollars that are needed for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom, for the salvation of souls. Not until more hearts are filled with the love to Christ, will the deficits be paid in our church treasuries and sufficient funds be supplied to cover the needs. Less preaching of money and more preaching of the love of Christ will produce more liberal givers.

Or take much of the indifference that is found to-day in respect to doctrinal purity. The reason for such indifference is that there is a woeful ignorance among Christians of what the Scriptures really teach. It is therefore not at all surprising that many Christians are not very sensitive in regard to doctrinal differences; they themselves do not know well the truth. Let us not forget that the Lord makes it the business of every Christian to judge the doctrine which he hears, even that of his pastor, whether it be true or false. The Bereans searched the Scriptures daily in order to know whether those things were so which Paul and Silas preached unto them, Acts 17, 10. 11. The admonition to beware of false prophets which come in sheep's clothing, Matt. 7, 15, and to try the spirits whether they are of God, 1 John 4, 1, is given to all Christians.

## III.

How shall doctrine be preached? Doctrinal preaching is by some considered to be dull and dry preaching; and indeed it is and will not serve its purpose if it is not done right.

Doctrinal sermons require a text that contains sufficient doctrinal material; not a text of a few words only that merely suggest a topic, such as faith or prayer, and merely serves as a sermon motto. No single text says all that the Scripture teaches on any single doctrine, but rather presents only a certain phase of that doctrine. No single text, for instance, speaks of all the attributes of God or of all that the Bible teaches on prayer, on faith, on good works, etc. The

preacher, therefore, must find and treat the specific thought which the text presents. By thus restricting his theme he will, however, increase his sermon material. But this requires painstaking labor: a thorough study of the text on the basis of the original, with due consideration of the context and the relation of that specific phase of a doctrine to the entire doctrine and to the entire *corpus doctrinae* of the Scriptures.

After the preacher has thoroughly studied and thoroughly understands his doctrinal text, he must do two things: he must present the doctrine of the text in a popular way, and he must apply it to the needs of his hearers.

In a previous paragraph we made the statement that doctrinal preaching presents a popular course in dogmatics. In this statement the word "popular" must be emphasized. The preacher must beware of preaching doctrine as though he were an instructor lecturing to a group of theological students in the classroom. The preacher must not preach over the heads of his people and therefore must avoid technical terms and a too concentrated form of presentation. Nor should the preacher attempt to make any doctrine clear to human reason, which attempt would be futile anyway, but he should merely make sure that his hearers understand or know *what* the Bible teaches on a certain point.

After a doctrine has been clearly taught, it must be applied. The hearer, for instance, should be shown why he should believe the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ: first, because the Bible clearly teaches it. If men may reject this doctrine, why should they not be permitted — that is logical reasoning — to reject any other doctrine that is clearly revealed? Secondly, the doctrine of the virgin birth of Christ is necessary for the sinlessness of Christ's human nature and therefore is a very important factor in God's plan of salvation. Ps. 49, 7. 8; Heb. 7, 26. 27.

Or take the doctrine of predestination. This doctrine, clearly taught in the Scripture, leaving no room for Calvinism or synergism, gives to the Christian the assurance that nothing can rob him of his salvation, but that God will keep him in His grace or restore him if he has fallen. How this doctrine should be taught so that one will neither despair of his salvation nor securely live in sin, but rather understand the purpose and receive the comfort of this doctrine, we learn from Article XI of the Formula of Concord, *Triglot,* pp. 1066—1069.

Doctrinal sermons are the most difficult to preach. Their preparation requires much time and attention on the part of the preacher, much study and hard work. It is to be feared that this is one reason, if not the chief reason, why doctrinal preaching is much neglected.

The real demands made upon the pastor in this strenuous age are greater than they have been, and besides there are many more distractions. When a preacher is pressed for time or is not in the mood of doing real hard work, the sermon offering pious platitudes or general warnings, exhortations, and admonitions, with a few stories, some statistics, and perhaps some references to current news is the easier to prepare and to preach. But such poor diet does not at times even offer the milk of the Word, much less "the strong meat that belongeth to them that are of full age," Heb. 5, 12—14. He is indeed a poor teacher anywhere who does not advance in knowledge those whom he is called to teach. But what shall we say of a preacher who makes his hearers sit through sermons for a whole year, and even a number of years, without advancing them in spiritual knowledge and in spiritual life because he fails to declare unto them all the counsel of God and has kept back from them much that would have been profitable, not faithfully ministering to those blood-bought souls which God has entrusted to him and for which he must give an account? Acts 20, 20. 27. 28; Heb. 13, 17. J. H. C. Fritz.

# The Pastor and Secular Literature.

"Give attendance to reading," St. Paul admonished the young clergyman Timothy. And what Timothy was told is to be impressed upon every clergyman: *give attendance to reading.* When, after the death of Moses, Joshua assumed leadership over Israel, God told him: "This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night." To one who would lead and teach others God addresses these challenging words: "Thou, therefore, which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" Rom. 2, 21.

Many normal schools have adopted as a motto that passage which I just quoted from Romans: "Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" And the clergy, who are told by their Master *to teach* men, may also adopt this motto.

It is but natural that one who is impressed with this fact, that he ought to give attendance to reading, should ask, What shall I read, and what shall I study? And here again God's Word directs him. To Ezekiel it was said: "Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll and go speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that roll. And He said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness" (chap. 3, 1—3). That roll which Ezekiel was to eat was God's Word. Of this Word Jeremiah tells us: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart, for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts" (chap. 15, 16).

The very first truth, therefore, which we wish to stress when speaking of secular literature and the pastor is this, that no clergyman dare allow any secular literature whatever to interfere with his Bible-study. And one important proper use of secular literature is to have it drive us back into the Holy Book. Let us never forget, the preacher's work is concerned with the teaching of the Bible. God wants every one to do his utmost in that work in which he is engaged. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," Eccl. 9, 10. And the preacher cannot do his best unless he continues to study the Bible. The clergyman, moreover, requires a firm faith in order to support him amid the temptations, assaults, and doubts whereby Satan, the world, and his own flesh trouble him. The pastor above all others therefore requires the light, the support, the direction, the comfort, correction, and warning which God's Word provides. And there are so many more reasons which should move a pastor to study the Bible diligently and daily that we could fill the entire space allotted to us by these alone.

However, the pastor should also read those authors who have called attention to the truths of the Bible and to their exact meaning and proper application to present conditions. In reading and studying the Scripture, it is easy to overlook some important matter. God has therefore given us men who point out to us what we are so prone to slight when we read His precious Word. Among these writers on Holy Writ there is none that surpasses Martin Luther. Sad to say, there are still untold numbers of clergymen who do not even understand the a-b-c of the Christian religion as presented in Dr. Martin Luther's Enchiridion. There are thousands of so-called Christian clergymen who still condemn as sins things that are no sins and permit thoughts, emotions, and actions which are strictly forbidden in God's Word.

The reading of Luther's works, especially of his catechetical writings, should prove of utmost value to all clergymen. But the writings of men less able than Luther are also worthy of attention. From the days of Paul to the days of Luther there is no greater teacher of the Church than St. Augustine. But it is chiefly since Luther's day that God gave to His Church no small number of very able writers. Luther blazed the trail, and then what mighty spirits arose to write church history, exegesis, homiletics, religious poetry, hermeneutics, and dogmatics! To these the word of the Lord applies: "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit," 1 Cor. 12, 8. And also that other: "Having, then, gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness," Rom. 12, 6—8. I shall not attempt to enumerate the religious authors that should be read. Which of them a pastor is to read most diligently will depend upon the nature of his work, the place, the time, and the people whom he serves. The books on theological encyclopedia and propaedeutics mention the chief writers on the different subjects, and the reviews in our religious press call attention to these modern or contemporary publications which may be of value to a clergyman.[1]

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1) In his essay *Die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche die wahre sichtbare Kirche Gottes auf Erden* Dr. Walther submits as his twentieth thesis: "Die ev-luth. Kirche haelt die Gabe der Schriftauslegung hoch, wie sie einzelnen von Gott gegeben ist." In support of this thesis he quotes 1 Cor. 12, 4. 7. 8. 10. 30; 14, 32 and 1 Thess. 5, 20. And then he writes: "Da hiernach die Gabe der Weissagung oder Schriftauslegung zum gemeinen Nutzen der ganzen Kirche gegeben wird, dieselbe aber nicht alle Christen oder Lehrer haben; und da hiernach ferner die Geister der Propheten, das ist, die mit der Gabe der Auslegung Begnadigten, also von Gott gelehrt sind, dass sie nicht allein gehoert sein wollen, sondern andern Propheten oder Auslegern

In concluding this part of my article, I wish to repeat my warning that we dare allow no secular literature to interfere with our study of sound theological productions.

However, it were a serious mistake if a clergyman came to the conclusion that he need pay no attention at all to secular literature. It is positively necessary that a clergyman also give attention to what scientists, poets, historians, politicans, and journalists are saying. The men of God of old gave close attention to the secular learning of their day. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, Acts 7, 22. He had not neglected those writers though they were pagans. St. Paul was acquainted with the Greek poets. He quotes from them. He reminds the men of Athens of the inscriptions upon their temples. St. Augustine was perfectly at home in the classical literature of Rome and had read much of that of the Greeks, at least in Latin translations. Luther's writings give evidence that he had studied classical literature and could quote from memory many of the sayings of the heathen poets. He was a great admirer of much which the pagans had written. So highly did he value that heathen book *Aesop's Fables* that he translated quite a number of these fables, and in his introduction to them he writes: "Dies Buch von den Fabeln oder Maerlein ist ein hochberuehmt Buch gewesen bei den Allergelehrtesten auf Erden, sonderlich unter den Heiden. Wiewohl auch noch jetzund, die Wahrheit zu sagen, von aeusserlichem Leben in der Welt zu reden, wuesste ich ausser der Heiligen Schrift nicht viel Buecher, die diesem ueberlegen sein sollten, so man Nutz, Kunst und Weisheit und nicht hochbedaechtig Geschrei wollt ansehen; denn man darin unter schlechten Worten und einfaeltigen Fabeln die allerfeinste Lehre, Warnung und Unterricht findet (wer sie zu brauchen weiss), wie man sich im Haushalten, in und gegen der Obrigkeit und Untertanen schicken soll, auf dass man klueglich und friedlich unter den boesen Leuten in der falschen, argen Welt leben moege." (St. Louis ed., XIV, 792 sqq.)

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untertan sind und gern weichen; und da es hiernach endlich des Heiligen Geistes ausdrueckliches Gebot ist, die Weissagung oder Gabe der Auslegung nicht zu verachten: so gehoert auch dies zu den Kennzeichen einer rechten Kirche, dass sie die einzelnen von Gott sonderlich verliehene Gabe der Schriftauslegung hochhalte." After this he quotes the testimonies of Melanchthon, Gerhard, and J. J. Rambach. Rambach's statement is very explicit and helpful: "Dass die Arbeiten und Schriftauslegungen anderer, obgleich sie nicht schlechterdings notwendig sind, wenn man die Schrift auslegen lernen will, nicht zu verachten seien, zeigt nicht nur die Schrift an, sondern lehrt auch die Natur der Sache. So wird 1 Kor. 12, 10. 11 gesagt, dass Gott einigen die Kenntnis von mancherlei Sprachen, andern die Faehigkeit, die Sprachen auszulegen, gegeben habe, daher einer der Gaben des andern gebrauchen soll. Aehnlicherweise wird uns 1 Thess. 5, 20 geboten, die Weissagung oder die Gabe, die Heiligen Schriften auszulegen, welche andern verliehen ist, nicht zu verachten, sondern hochzuhalten und zu unserm Nutzen zu verwenden. Denn es waere in der Tat ein Zeichen grossen Hochmuts von andern gehoert und gelesen sein wollen und doch nicht andere hoeren und lesen wollen."

Luther thought highly of Quintilian and Cicero. Of the first of these he writes to Spalatin: *"Quintilianus vero unus sit, qui optimos reddat adolescentes, imo viros. Hunc rogo ante omnia ne derelinquas, sive Phachus sive Hessus profiteatur, modo sit inter professiones una. Ego prorsus Quintilianum fere omnibus autoribus praefero, qui simul et instituit, simul quoque eloquentiam monstrat, i. e., verbo et re docet quam felicissime"* (De Wette, *Briefe*, Vol. I, p. 385).

Luther was an admirer of Cato. The material for his hymns he took from the Word of God, but the art of German poetry he had learned from secular composers. In fact, *Luther regretted that he had not given more attention to the secular poets and historians.* He complains bitterly that he had wasted his precious time studying the scholastic theologians, who neither understood nor taught theology, but belonged to those who always learned and never came to a knowledge of the truth, 2 Tim. 3, 7, "desiring to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm," 1 Tim. 1, 7.

Of Luther's acquaintance with the classics Dr. O. G. Schmidt writes in his monograph, p. 12, as follows: "Unter den roemischen Prosaikern, mit denen sich Luther schon in Erfurt beschaeftigt hat, wird von Melanchthon zuerst Cicero genannt, eine Angabe, die in seinen Schriften volle Bestaetigung findet. Kein alter Schriftsteller wird hier haeufiger erwaehnt, weniger zwar in ausdruecklichen Zitaten, als vielmehr in allgemeinen Reflexionen und Urteilen ueber seinen Gedankengehalt und Wert. Waehrend ein neuerer Historiker den letzteren tief herabdrueckt, wird dagegen von Luther Cicero grossenteils mit Auszeichnung behandelt. In ihm sei ein hoher Verstand gewesen, weil er aus und nach der Vernunft geschlossen habe, es sei sicherer, sich auf den Wahn und Meinung begeben, der da haelt, dass ein ewig Leben nach diesem sei, denn dass alles zeitlich und vergaenglich sei, Leib und Seel'. Aristoteles sei ihm zwar an Scharfsinn und Geist ueberlegen. Dennoch uebertreffe Cicero Aristotelem weit in Philosophia und mit Lehren. *Officia Ciceronis* seien viel besser denn *Ethica Aristotelis.* Die feinsten und besten *quaestiones* in der Philosophia habe Cicero gehandelt: ob ein Gott sei, was Gott sei, ob er sich auch menschlicher Haendel annehme oder nicht. Aristoteles sei nur ein guter und listiger Dialecticus gewesen, der den *methodum* und richtigen, ordentlichen Weg im Lehren gehalten hat; aber die Sachen und den rechten Kern hat er nicht gelehrt wie Cicero. Wer die rechtschaffene Philosophia lernen will, der lese Ciceronem. Die tiefe Weisheit und rastlose Taetigkeit des Roemers in der Staatsverwaltung wird von Luther hoch gepriesen. Er wundert sich, dass ein Mensch in so viel grossen Geschaeften und Haendeln so viel hat lesen und schreiben koennen. Waehrend Aristoteles, der muessige Esel, Geld und Gut und gute, faule Tage genug hatte, hat jener in grossen Sorgen, im Regiment gesteckt und grosse Buerde,

Muehe und Arbeit auf ihm gehabt. Nur wer selbst annaehernd Aehnliches geleistet hat, vermag dies zu wuerdigen, ohne jemals auslernen zu koennen. Die Episteln Ciceronis versteht niemand recht, er sei denn zwanzig Jahr in einem fuertrefflichen Regiment gewesen. Wenn Menschenweisheit ausreichend waere, wuerde er den roemischen Staat gerettet haben. Voll Bewunderung spricht Luther von Ciceros feiner Dialektik und blendender Beredsamkeit. Er erinnert an Julius Caesar, welcher sagte: 'Sooft ich des Bruti Schriften lese, so lasse ich mich beduenken, ich sei beredt; wenn ich aber *Ciceronis orationes* lese, so bin ich unberedt und lalle wie ein Kind.' Mit grosser Kunst weiss Cicero die Schwaechen der Sache, die er verteidigt, zu verhuellen, dagegen ihre Lichtseiten hervorzuheben." [2]

Let us keep in mind that at Luther's time a comparatively small part of the best secular literature had been written; and what had been written and printed could only be read by a few, and by them with considerable difficulty. To-day, however, the matter is far otherwise. There is such a mass of secular literature tossed from the presses that no one can think of reading even as much as one-fourth of it all. The preacher must make a selection. In doing that, he must choose certain important *dailies and magazines*. His people read the dailies and some of the chief periodicals. Their thoughts are found to be colored by the contents of these publications; and if the pastor is not to fight as one that beateth the air, he must know what the people of his time and country are reading. This current periodical literature constitutes a confession, as it were, of the world in the midst of which we are living. With this confession we may confront it. We have a wonderful vantage-point when we can say to a man, These are your own words. This is what you have said; this is what you have written. And there is an immense advantage if we may tell our people: The men and women of this world tell us this of themselves.

A man of judgment and discernment will not require much time to find the articles and the items which offer him the proper material for his animadversions, criticism, comment, proof, and refutation. If the means of a pastor will not permit him to subscribe for important journals, he may join several brethren in subscriptions and then have the periodical circulate. There are, moreover, public libraries which offer an abundance of reading-material.

We hardly think that it is necessary to warn those who are in somewhat backward communities against introducing discussions to

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2) *Luther's Bekanntschaft mit den alten Classikern.* Ein Beitrag zur Lutherforschung von Oswald Gottlob Schmidt, weiland Doktor der Theologie, Pfarrer und Superintendent in Werdau. Published by Verlag von Veit & Co., Leipzig. 1883. — If the reader wishes to have further proof on Luther's acquaintance with classical literature, let him read Dr. Schmidt's essay *in toto*.

which their people are entire strangers. At the same time, however, we dare not forget that there are country districts, back in the mountains, the inhabitants of which through club subscription become acquainted with the most modern of magazines.

As to other literature, we would give a prominent place to good histories. History, when it is truthfully and intelligently reported, always supports the claims of God's Word. God's Word tells us, for instance, that the love of money is the root of all evil. Now read the histories of wars and let them tell you what caused these terrible wars. Again and again our *secular* writers tell us that wars will never cease *till the profit in dollars and cents is taken out of war.*

History also offers impressive illustrations for all manner of moral truths. The Funk and Wagnalls Company has published a volume, *Historical Lights,* which contains six thousand incidents of history illustrative of important truths and natural processes. In most cases a theologian has studied and read a number of histories while at school, but he may still profit by rereading those which he has already read and by adding to their number. Carlyle says, "Histories teach by example." There are moreover, especially in English, historians who have excelled in the use of exact diction, felicitous phrasing, easy fluency, interesting varieties of style, and warmth of expression. We will mention but a few: Macaulay, Froude, Hume, Greene, Prescott, Motley, Bancroft, Gibbon, Carlyle. And if one has acquired sufficient ease in understanding the classics of Greece and Rome, he may add Thucydides, Herodotus, Tacitus, Livy, Sallust. When nothing more is wanted than the bare facts in a certain case, the encyclopedia will direct us to these or to the books which supply the information. But for general reading the preacher should select the best writers only.[3]

The pastor should also be acquainted with the best poetry of the language in which he speaks. Of course, he should be at home in the hymnology of his Church, but there are many other poems of value. We are not telling him when and how he may quote this poetry. But even though he never quote all of it, he ought to know about the best. Longfellow's *Psalm of Life,* Byron's *Hebrew Melodies,* Milton's *Paradise Lost* (at least in parts), Gray's *Elegy,* Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome,* Rudyard Kipling's *If,* Goldsmith's *Deserted Village,* Cowper's *The Task,* George Crabbe's *The Village* and *Tales in Verse.* Then there are the poems of Burns, Addison, Scott, Browning, and those of our own Americans, too many to mention. A number of Edgar Guest's poems and some poems of anonymous authors are distinctly worth while. The man of discerning vision may

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3) Any one who wishes to consult the estimate which a learned historian has given us of nearly all worth-while historical works up to the end of the last century will do well to consult *Manual of Historical Literature,* by Charles Kendall Adams, LL. D., published by Harper & Bros.

find many a stanza that will repay committing to memory or at least careful attention.

Instead of leaving to chance what you may hit upon, it is a good plan to browse through a history of literature. Public libraries have any number of them. In all this reading it is well to remember Luther's advice *"Non multa, sed multum"* and Bacon's counsel "Read not to contradict nor to accept, but to masticate and digest."

And now the question arises, Should the preacher read novels? Even before we answer the question, we may assume that nearly every preacher has read a number of novels. But it is true that it certainly is out of place for a preacher to spend much of his valuable time in novel-reading. However, we would not frown upon a pastor's reading a number of the best novels and plays. The great historical novels are eminently worth while. From such reading a threefold profit may accrue. In the first place, the reader will receive vivid impressions of the historical events with which the novelist deals. He will be able to visualize much that he has stored in his memory. In the second place, some of the best of the writers of historical romance and also other novelists have given us many a splendid analysis of human motive, inner conflict, and mental vacillation. In the third place, every one who reads good authors will have his vocabulary, phrasing, speech, and idiom colored and influenced by what he is reading.[4] And now the very fact that the romance, novel, or story attracts the reader, holds him, often spellbound, causes him to absorb the denotation and connotation of words, the turning of a phrase, and the manner of statement without his becoming conscious of it.

Among the writers of drama, the highest and first place belongs to Shakespeare. Much of what he has written has abiding value and has never been surpassed by any secular writer. He is more frequently quoted than any other. Shakespeare has expressed many a natural truth in figure of speech and in turn of language so excellent as to defy all efforts at improvement. Nor need we fear that he is not understood by the rank and file. If he is quoted with good elocution, exact articulation, and the application is pointed, the plain man and woman will understand what is said. Note the following instances: Concerning the dangers of prosperity he has given us this: "It is the bright day that brings forth the adder and craves wary walking" (*Julius Caesar*, 2, 1). That is much more picturesque and impressive than the German *"Der Mensch kann alles vertragen, nur nicht eine Reihe von guten Tagen."* Shakespeare's lines, moreover, are superior to those of Nepos concerning Conon, *"Accidit huic quod ceteris mor-*

4) Cicero makes one of the characters in his *De Oratore* say the following: *ut, cum in sole ambulem, etiamsi ego aliam ob causam ambulem, fieri natura tamen, ut colorer, sic, cum istos libros studiosius legerim, sentio illorum tactu orationem meam quasi colorari.* (II, 14, 60.)

*talibus, ut inconsideratior in secunda quam in adversa esset fortuna.*" How wonderfully Shakespeare expresses the devil's tricks when he tells us, "And oftentimes, to win us to our harm, The instruments of darkness tell us truths, Win us with honest trifles, to betray's In deepest consequence" (*Macbeth,* I, 3)! And how exactly he delineates the deceitfulness of sin when he has Macbeth say: "If it were done when 'tis done!" to which he adds: "That but this blow might be the be-all and the end-all!" How pointedly he impresses upon us the truth that *materia medica* contains no specific for a wounded conscience: "Canst thou minister to a mind diseased?" (*Macbeth,* V, 3). But if I begin to quote Shakespeare, this whole article may become an anthology of that great man. Oliver Wendell Holmes has written many good things in his *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* and his *Professor at the Breakfast Table.* Just now there comes to mind his way of saying what Shakespeare said about the instruments of darkness; he tells us: "The rottenest bank has some genuine legal tender," which amounts to saying that it takes a few truths to put a swindle over.

For lighter reading the pastor may choose times when he finds himself weary from arduous labors, the time of a vacation, the time when there must be gradual "running down of the clock" after intense effort. But even at such times he ought not to read that from which he can gain no profit. There are too many good novels which help us to increase our acquaintance with the idiom of the language and which supply material for the profitable study of psychology. There are historical and problem novels which are distinctly informative and thought-provoking. There is Scott's *Ivanhoe,* Mrs. Mulock's *John Halifax Gentleman,* George Elliot's *Adam Bede, Mill on the Floss, Silas Marner,* Thackeray's *Vanity Fair,* Charles Reade's *Cloister and the Hearth* — but there isn't sufficient space even for the titles of the very best. However, though a pastor has not read *Don Quixote,* by Cervantes, and *Gil Blas,* by Le Sage (translated by Smollet), he should at least know the general plan and purpose of those two celebrated writings. Every Lutheran minister should have read with care *Tale of the Tub* by Dean Swift and *Pilgrim's Progress* by Bunyan.

I have not spoken of the German classics; space does not permit. In fact, I am painfully conscious of the lacunae in this article, but limitations of space demanded brevity.

It is scarcely necessary to say that we are not to approve of all that we read. Luther was a great reader of heathen authors, but he certainly was no yes-man. He exercised fine discrimination when reading Cicero, Terence, or Livy. While it remains true, "All is yours" (1 Cor. 3, 22), the direction is also still in force, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," 1 Thess. 5, 21.

MARTIN S. SOMMER.

# "Private Interpretation," 2 Pet. 1, 20.

"Besides, for the curbing of quarrelsome spirits, it [*i. e.*, the Holy Synod] has decreed that in matters of faith and morals belonging to the edification which is produced by Christian doctrine nobody, relying on his own wisdom, should twist Holy Scripture to his own understanding or contrary to that sense which the holy Mother Church has held and does hold, whose province it is to judge about the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, or again, that nobody should dare to interpret Holy Scripture itself against the unanimous consensus of the Fathers, even if interpretations of this sort have never been published before. Those who act contrariwise are to be publicly mentioned by the officials and to be punished with the penalties fixed by a judge."

Hardly any theologian has to be told that this statement is found in the *Decrees of the Council of Trent* (Sess. IV, chap. 2). What might appear disconcerting is that this strong blast against an interpretation of Scripture-passages which differs from that of the Church and the Fathers apparently has Scripture authority to rely upon. Is it not evident that St. Peter in the passage appearing at the head of this article opposes *private* interpretation of prophetic utterances contained in the Scriptures? What other meaning can one find in the Authorized Version's rendering, "knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation"?

It is a question which Johann Gerhard in his famous *Loci Theologici* courageously faces. Having quoted the statement in Greek, πᾶσα προφητεία ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως οὐ γίνεται, he asks, Why is this true? And he replies, "Because, according to the following verse, in old times holy men of God did not speak on the basis of their own private judgment, but by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The same Being therefore who is the Author of Scripture is its supreme and authentic Interpreter. He who lays down a law is the best and highest interpreter of the law." And he continues: "De eo autem quaeritur, quae sit ἰδία ἐπίλυσις? Unde petendum sit Spiritus Sancti in Scripturis interpretandis dictamen? Unde agnosci possit ecclesiasticos illos interpretes mentem Spiritus Sancti in Scripturis loquentis recte assequi? (*Loc. Theol.*, II, c. 1). Yes, that is an important question, What is meant here by "private interpretation"? Where do we obtain the Holy Spirit's own explanation of the old prophecies? How are we to assure ourselves that the interpreter whose exegesis is placed before us in books and sermons and catechetical instruction has laid hold of the sense which the Holy Spirit intended? Evidently Gerhard is touching on matters which are of vital concern to every Christian, especially to every Christian theologian, and we now have considerations in sufficient number to convince us that an investiga-

tion of the meaning of 2 Pet. 1, 20 does not merely belong to the category of mental gymnastics.

It is clear that Peter is speaking not of prophecy in general, but of Old Testament prophecies. The context demands that we think of them. It is clear, too, what the apostle has in mind when he speaks of ἐπίλυσις. The strange suggestion which holds that the text should be emended or altered we need not here consider; the MSS. overwhelmingly favor the reading which our editions of the New Testament present. While ἐπίλυσις occurs nowhere else in the Scripture, it must mean interpretation, or explanation. In the sense of "interpret" the verb ἐπιλύω is used Mark 4, 34 and in a number of passages in the Apostolic Fathers, etc. The view held by some, that ἐπίλυσις here signifies destruction, annihilation, cannot be entertained. If the word were κατάλυσις, we should acquiesce at once, but for ἐπίλυσις no such meaning can be demonstrated. We simply cling to the meaning "interpretation," adopted by most commentators, and with that we shall fare very well.

It has been held that St. Peter in this verse wishes to express his conviction on the origin of Old Testament prophecy, saying that no prophecy *arises* through human interpretation. We shall all agree that the sense yielded by such an explanation would be entirely in keeping with the analogy of faith, and if our only task were to find a doctrinally satisfactory interpretation of a passage, we might now write, *Finis*. But in the way of this exegesis there stands first the present tense, which makes it evident that St. Peter is not speaking of the origin of the prophecies in Old Testament times; for in that case he would have employed the past tense, either the aorist or the imperfect. One must not overlook what has been pointed to above, that the definite body of Old Testament prophecies is in the mind of Peter as he here speaks, the prophecies contained in the writings of the Old Covenant. In the second place, the view under discussion is grammatically impossible or, to put it more cautiously, very improbable. Γίνεσθαι with the genitive was not used by the Greeks to express an idea like the one in question. It is true that here we set ourselves in opposition to the late A. T. Robertson, who very vigorously championed this very interpretation and who, it will be agreed, deserves to be heard. We shall quote a paragraph of his, which, though it contains several thoughts which receive our hearty endorsement, in its main idea seems to us to be incorrect. In his book *Epochs in the Life of Simon Peter* he says (p. 303 f.), discussing our passage: "Peter says that they [the readers] know the origin and source of prophecy of Scripture in a passage (vv. 20. 21) that is usually misunderstood and misapplied by the words 'of private interpretation.' Alford rightly insists that γίνεται here does not mean 'is' (ἐστίν), as it never does, in fact, in spite of what Bigg says and

despite frequent mistranslations of γίνεσθαι as being the same as εἶναι. The difference is clearly shown in the use of ἦν (was) in John 1, 1, and ἐγένετο (became) in John 1, 14, both of the Logos. As Alford insists, γίνεται here followed by the ablative case ἐπιλύσεως means 'comes from, springs out of.' This is made certain by v. 21, which explains (γάρ, for) the meaning of v. 20: 'For no prophecy was ever brought by the will of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.' That is to say, prophecy has divine, not human origin. One does not pump up a prophecy of himself. Ἐπίλυσις occurs only here in the New Testament, but the verb ἐπιλύω, to unloose, to untie, occurs in Mark 4, 34, where it can mean that Jesus disclosed parables to the disciples, and in Acts 19, 39, where it means to decide. It is the misinterpretation of v. 20 (private interpretation) that the Roman Catholics use to prove the peril of an ordinary man reading the Scriptures without a priest who tells him what it means. But the passage is not about interpretation of prophecy, but about the source of prophecy." In his *Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*[2] (p. 514 f.) he voices the same opinion and points as passages having a similar construction to 2 Cor. 4, 7; Acts 20, 37; and Acts 20, 3, with the admission that the last one is "probably parallel." Professor Robertson might have added that the modern Greek version of the New Testament published by the British Bible Society has this rendering, which supports his interpretation, οὐδε μία προφητεία τῆς γραφῆς γίνεται ἐξ ἰδίας τοῦ προφητεύοντος διασαφήσεως.

In spite of the weight which the authority of Robertson lends to this interpretation we have to continue our dissent. If authorities are to be cited, we have to say that Blass in his grammar (Blass-Debrunner, § 162, 7, note), Thayer and Preuschen-Bauer in their Lexica (*s. v.* γίνομαι), do not accept Robertson's view.[1] Γίνεσθαι with the genitive as a part of the predicate denotes coming into a certain sphere or arriving at the possession of some characteristic or some

1) The reader may appreciate a note embodying some other modern translations of our verse. Goodspeed: "You must understand this, in the first place, that no prophecy of Scripture can be understood through one's own powers." Moffatt: "Understanding this at the outset that no prophetic Scripture allows a man to interpret it by himself." *Twentieth Century New Testament:* "But first be assured of this: There is no prophetic teaching found in Scripture that can be interpreted by man's unaided reason." Friedrich Hauck (*Das Neue Testament Deutsch*): "*Vor allem wisset das, dass keine Weissagung der Schrift eigner Aufloesung (Deutung) unterliegt.*" Georg Hollmann and Wilhelm Bousset (*Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments neu uebersetzt und fuer die Gegenwart erklaert*): "*Das muesst ihr vor allem erkennen, dass Schrift-Weissagung willkuerliche Deutung nicht zulaesst.*" It will be observed that these modern translators, while not agreed among themselves, all range themselves against Robertson's opinion.

attitude. Cf. Acts 20, 3: (Paul) came to entertain the resolution (ἐγένετο γνώμης).[2])

Thayer, having stated that γίνομαι with the genitive signifies "to become the property of any one, to come into the power of a person or thing," adduces our passage and interprets it thus: "No one can explain prophecy by his own mental power (it is not a matter of subjective interpretation); but to explain it, one needs the same illumination of the Holy Spirit in which it originated." What we ought to note here are the words enclosed in parentheses, for they constitute an almost perfect rendering of our sentence: Prophecy is not a matter of subjective interpretation. If Thayer had written: "Prophecy does not *become* a matter of subjective interpretation," we could not improve on his rendering. Analyzing the statement of Peter as given in this translation, one will see at once that it can be taken in two meanings, a fact which in part is responsible for the variety of translations submitted in the note above. The meaning may be: "No one has the *right* to give to a prophecy of Scripture his own interpretation," or it may be: "No one has the *ability* to interpret a prophecy of Scripture with powers of his own." Goodspeed and the *Twentieth Century New Testament* sponsor the latter sense (in which they have the endorsement of Thayer); Moffatt, Hauck, Hollmann, and Bousset the former. It is safe to say that they all would agree that the translation adopted above is correct. But just as if to demonstrate that it is difficult for anybody to translate without at the same time interpreting, they have added a word or phrase showing whether they hold Peter is speaking of ability or of authority with respect to interpretation. To decide which one of the two significations was in the mind of the apostle, the context will have to be appealed to.

In the section vv. 12—21 Peter is concerned with giving force and emphasis to the instruction with which he began the epistle and which extended to v. 11. Of the important matters which he has laid before his readers he intends to remind them while he lives, — it will not be a long time any more, — and his aim is to enable them readily to recall these admonitions and principles. His earnest endeavor in this respect is due to his conviction that what he has taught them is the absolute truth. Not fables and myths have guided him as he has spoken to them of the power and coming of Jesus Christ. He himself saw the glory of Jesus at the transfiguration, and he himself heard the voice from heaven declare the divine sonship

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2) The passages on which Robertson relies, including the one just quoted, plainly do not prove his point. The only one which might with some show of justice be adduced, Acts 20, 37, on close inspection simply yields the meaning "A loud wailing of all ensued"; there is nothing to compel us to translate, "A loud wailing arose *from* all."

of our Lord. But there is a factor which is still more certain and firm — the prophetic Word in the Scriptures, likewise speaking of Jesus and His return. About this Word it is important to remember that it does not become a matter of private interpretation (in that case it would not be reliable); it is not a human, fallible word, but was spoken by men who uttered what the Holy Spirit made them utter. If this hasty sketch of the line of thought of Peter is correct, it shows that what he wishes to bring out in v. 20 is not our inability to interpret the Scriptures without the aid of the Spirit (a thought which is altogether correct by itself), but the lack of authority for any one to give to the Scriptures his own explanation.

There is still the word "private" to consider, for which we above accepted the rendering of Thayer, "subjective." A glance at the Greek original (ἰδία) suffices to show that private here must not be taken in the sense of "secret," "hidden from view," but "one's own," "individual." To arrive at a clear view of what is meant, we inquire, What is the antithesis? Does Peter mean to say, Not our own interpretation must be proposed, but that of somebody else, that of the Church or of a priest? The context says, no. What the apostle wishes to inculcate is the truth that the Word is firm, reliable, majestic, inviolable. There it stands in divine dignity; let no one touch it with presumptuous hands. That Word has spoken of the great matters pertaining to Jesus, His second coming and our entering into His glorious kingdom, and what it has said must not be altered or weakened by bringing in an exegesis which is foreign to the words. The Word is not a football of the interpreter, which he may kick about at will. He is the servant, not the master. Let him become humble and say, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." The antithesis, then, to one's own interpretation is the sense which the Word itself conveys to us.

Now the meaning of the passage becomes quite evident. The apostle tells us that the prophecies given in the Scriptures must not be tampered with as we approach them in the role of interpreters. The Word of these prophecies is a sacred, inspired Word, and we must treat it with reverence and not think that we may give it any meaning we desire. On the contrary, the Word is an objective entity, and in reading, interpreting, and applying it, we must not let our subjective feelings or preconceived notions be the judge of its meaning. Peter is here issuing a warning, for instance, against our turning allegorizing interpreters, who, not satisfied with the plain significance of the words, try to find some hidden meaning in them, although Scripture itself does not give a hint that an allegorical interpretation is intended. There is implied here a warning for us not to be like those people who shake and twist and maltreat a passage till finally, much against its will, it yields the meaning the self-

willed interpreters are bent on extracting from it. The apostle, to state one more implication, urges us not to be like the rationalists who, offended by the miraculous content of the Scripture, endeavor to explain all its statements and narratives in such a way that the mysterious, supernatural element disappears.

What Peter, then, frowns on is not private interpretation as opposed to ecclesiastical or official interpretation. On the contrary, every individual Christian is to read the Scriptures and to meditate on them (Ps. 1, 2), which is equivalent to saying that he is to interpret them for himself. Is it not true that whoever ponders a saying of the Scriptures and applies it to himself is thereby doing some exegetical work? No thoughtful reading of a Scripture-passage is possible without some process of interpretation, that is, some mental effort to apprehend the meaning of the words; and that, after all, is the essence of interpretation — getting at the meaning of a statement. The nine-year-old girl — blessings on her! — who proclaims with glistening eyes, "Jesus loves me, for He says, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not,'" is a little exegete. She has gone into the divine garden and there picked a beautiful flower. What more can an old exegete, having a whole workshop filled with implements, accomplish? May interpretation of this kind ever flourish among us! But when we, instead of gathering and presenting the flowers of God's garden in their natural grace and loveliness, take a petal from a pansy and a rose and a violet and try to construct a flower of our own, then we are engaged in the mischievous business which Peter warns against. In that case we are offering our own interpretation instead of what the Scripture has entrusted to us. The people who are here given a verdict of condemnation are all those who, instead of accepting what the Bible teaches, endeavor by all manner of tricks and devices to put a meaning into the words different from the one which the Holy Spirit has placed there.

Even when we are dealing with the words of a human author, common honesty demands that we be not arbitrary and subjective in our interpretation as we set forth, and comment on, the meaning of his words. How much more should such a procedure be avoided by us when we are dealing with the Word of the great God which abideth forever! If Scripture were an enigmatic book and the prophecies were puzzles inviting us to try our ingenuity on them and the prize were given to him who is most clever in finding interesting, novel, fantastic meanings for the various passages, we should expect private, subjective, arbitrary interpretation to be declared permissible. But since the Bible is clear and the prophecies in it are not intended to furnish us material for diversion and pastime, but to be our guide, to instruct us as to the way of salvation, the

Christian can see the justice of the stand that all playing with the Word and twisting of its passages into something that suits our own fancy, all wresting and distorting of them (cf. 2 Pet. 3, 16), is improper and blasphemous. Let us, then, keeping these words of Peter in mind, interpret Scripture, but do it with reverence; let us dig deep into the strata of the Word containing precious metal, but let our concern be to bring up not what we ourselves have put into the shaft, but the gold which God has deposited there.

To revert to Johann Gerhard's questions with which we began, we have seen that, in speaking of "private interpretation," St. Peter warns against an unwarranted procedure, a course of license calling itself exegesis, but amounting to eisegesis, adding to, or subtracting from, the divine content of Scripture. The Holy Spirit's explanation of the old prophecies is found not in what the Church says about them, but in the prophecies themselves, which must be permitted to stand whether we find their message palatable or not. In determining whether those people who are interpreting the Bible for us, our pastors and teachers, do their work properly and give us the sense intended by the Holy Spirit, one criterion to employ is the question whether they faithfully adhere to what the Scripture itself says. We close with the words of St. Augustine, spoken in prayer to God and quoted by Gerhard: *"Sint castae deliciae meae Scripturae tuae, nec fallar in eis, nec fallam ex eis."*

W. Arndt.

# Recent Archeological Light on Nahum.

Those who investigate the harmony that exists between Nahum's prophecy and Nineveh's exit from history will be deeply impressed with the truth that the Old Testament prophets were guided, not by *Ahnungsvermoegen,* that ability to anticipate which keen-minded students of human affairs sometimes show, but by a divinely inspired prophetic genius. The composite picture which secular history draws of the last days of Nineveh shows in many particulars an amazing agreement with Nahum's prophetic delineation.

Until thirteen years ago the chief sources for a comparison of this prophecy and its fulfilment were: —

1. Herodotus (484—425 B. C.). He promises to tell how the Medes captured Nineveh (*History,* I, 106), but does not keep his promise in any of the manuscripts that have survived. He has, however, some significant notes on the fall of Nineveh in I, 103 ff.

2. Xenophon's *Anabasis* (III, 4, 7—12). This was written between 379 and 371 B. C. It codifies early fourth-century, B. C., traditions concerning the downfall of Nineveh and presents Xenophon's own notations at the sight of the ruined city.

3. Diodorus Siculus. He was a contemporary of Julius Caesar and Augustus and apparently wrote after the middle of the first century before Christ. He asserts that he spent thirty years in writing his *Chronicle* and offers perhaps the most detailed and least reliable of the classical historical accounts.

4. In addition, Eusebius in his *Chronicles* has retained snatches of references to relative statements by Alexander Polyhistor (I, 29, 14—19) as well as of Abydenus (*Chronicles,* I, 35, 28—37, 13).

5. In 1923 the British Museum tablet No. 21901 was published in C. J. Gadd's *The Fall of Nineveh.* Although the tablet is not dated, its neo-Babylonian cuneiform characters show that it is part of the considerable chronicle literature that originated in the Achaemenid period (550—330 B. C.). The references pertaining to the fall of Nineveh are partially fragmentary on account of the damage which the tablet has suffered, and even the undamaged sections, written in the annalistic style of the Babylonian Chronicle, contain only meager information with regard to the capture of Nineveh. But summarizing from the year 616 to 609 B. C. events that were of particular importance to the Babylonian writer and reader, this tablet (which definitely dates the fall of Nineveh at 612 and offers invaluable data concerning the preliminary siege of the city and its subsequent destinies) is a historical source of prime importance.

A comparison of Nahum's prophecies with the statements of the sources suggests the following points of contact and agreement: —

## I.

Nahum prophesies a long siege before the destruction of the city. Nineveh is ironically directed to store water, to prepare bricks and mortar (rather than hastily thrown-up earthworks) for the construction required by protracted siege (chap. 3, 14).

Diodorus has preserved hazy tradition and writes: "The siege dragged on for two years" and, as he proceeds to show, went into the third year. Until 1923 there was no substantiation for a three-year siege. Some have believed that the "three months occupied by the final siege had been expanded by tradition into three years." Gadd, who suggests this possibility (p. 17), adds, however: "Against this is the intervention of the 'Bactrian' (*i. e.*, Scythian) army, which seems to demand a longer time, and it is therefore probably better to accept the three years as correct, on the understanding that the war was by no means continuous." The Babylonian Chronicle of the fall of Nineveh, in presenting the preliminary attacks against Nineveh, in 614, thus "has a remarkable interest as at least a partial confirmation of the tradition which survives in Diodorus, that the siege of Nineveh extended into the third year" (Gadd, p. 9).

## II.

Nahum warns Nineveh that "all thy strongholds shall be like fig-trees with the first-ripe figs; if they shall be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater" (chap. 3, 12), *i. e.*, the many Assyrian fortresses that surround the city shall be captured with ease. The Babylonian Chronicle tablet offers remarkable substantiation for this prophecy in its record for the year 614 B. C. While the capital city sustained the first assaults in that year, the fortified towns in its environs began to fall. The tablet mentions specifically Tarbis, the present-day Sharîf Khân, northwest of Nineveh. Whatever fortifications may have been erected in the territory between Nineveh and Ashur must have fallen quickly; for in the same year Ashur was speedily and apparently easily destroyed.

## III.

Describing the final chapter in Nineveh's history, the prophet predicts that "while they [the Ninevites] are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured" (chap. 1, 10). Herodotus (I, 106) has a story of defeat through drunken debauch in the day of Cyaxares, immediately before the fall of Nineveh. But Diodorus more correctly associates this directly with the fall of the city. We are told (XXVI, 4): "Meantime the Assyrian king . . . gave way to negligence and distributed to his soldiers meats and liberal supplies of wine and provisions in general to make merry upon. While the whole army was thus carousing, the friends of Arbakes learned from some

deserters of the slackness and drunkenness which prevailed in the enemy's camp, and made an unexpected attack by night." The drunken security which Nahum beheld in his prophetic vision thus survives in traditional recollection.

## IV.

Three times Nahum predicts that Nineveh is to be destroyed by a flood. He prophesies: "With an overrunning flood He [God] will make an utter end of the place thereof" (chap. 1, 8). How this inundation is to come upon the city is told in his augury: "The gates of the river shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved" (chap. 2, 6). As a consequence, the prophet declares: "Nineveh is of old like a pool of water" (chap. 2, 8).

This triple emphasis of inundation is more than figurative, and the expression "gates of the rivers" cannot be described away as poetic imagery. Diodorus, recalling the well-known incident in which the river allied itself with the besiegers, recounts: "Now he [Sardanapalus] had an oracle handed down from his ancestors that none should capture Nineveh by force of arms unless the river first became an enemy to the city. . . . In the third year a succession of heavy downpours swelled the Euphrates [!], flooded part of the city, and cast down the wall to a length of twenty stadia. Thereupon the king realized that the oracle had been fulfilled and that the river had manifestly declared war upon the city" (II, 26. 27).

The Babylonian Chronicle makes no reference to this story, but the terse brevity and the summarizing tendencies of the annalistic style preclude any specific corroboration of this incident. However, the Babylonian tablet inferentially offers a very attractive background for the tradition which perpetuates the fulfilment of Nahum's prophecy. According to the chronology of the tablet the fall of Nineveh occurred in the month of Ab. The season of the heaviest rainfall in Nineveh occurs normally in March, while the Tigris attains its greatest height in the month of April and May, the period roughly parallel to Ab. Gadd (p. 18) concludes that the narrative of Diodorus would agree very well with the season as indicated in the Chronicle and concludes: "The truth doubtless is that Cyaxares simply took advantage of the devastation caused by an abnormally high Tigris in the preceding spring to press home his assault upon the only place in the walls which accident had rendered vulnerable."

In further support of the flooding of the city, Xenophon (*Anabasis*, III, 4, 7—12) presents another version of the same incident.

## V.

Nahum predicts that Nineveh will be destroyed by fire: "The fire shall devour thy bars," he writes (chap. 3, 13), and he repeats: "The fire shall devour thee" (chap. 3, 15).

Destruction by fire, as frequent as it was in the ancient Orient, was not always the inevitable destiny of a captured city. But Nineveh was consumed by fire. The Babylonian Chronicle again is silent on this detail, which was of no particular moment from its point of view. But this silence is not shared by Diodorus, who records that Sardanapalus "despairing of his fate, but resolved not to fall into the hands of his enemies, . . . prepared a gigantic pyre in the royal precincts, heaped up all his gold and silver and his kingly raiment as well upon it, shut up his concubines and eunuchs in the chamber he had made in the midst of the pyre, and burnt himself and the palace together with all of them (II, 27). And Abydenus echoes the same tradition when he speaks of Sarakos, who "burnt himself and his royal palace" (Eusebius, *Chronicles,* I, 35, 28, 37, 13).

Whatever actual history may lurk behind this dramatic *dénouement,* the excavations upon the site of Nineveh have revealed the truth of Nahum's double prophecy concerning destruction by fire. The consuming flames, Layard, *Discoveries at Nineveh* (p. 231), reports: "The palace had been destroyed by fire. The alabaster slabs were almost reduced to lime, and many of them fell to pieces as soon as uncovered. The places which others had occupied could only be traced by a thin white deposit like a coat of plaster, left by the burnt alabaster upon the wall of sun-dried bricks."

## VI.

The capture of Nineveh, so Nahum prophesies, was to be attended by a great slaughter. He draws this vivid picture: "There is a multitude of slain and a great number of carcasses, and there is none end of their corpses; they stumble upon their corpses" (chap. 3, 3). Through subsequent centuries the memory of the carnage and the capture of Nineveh persisted. Diodorus relates: "In two battles fought on the plain before the city the rebels defeated the Assyrians, slew Galaemenes [the Assyrian general on the field], slaughtered many of the opposing forces in the pursuit; and as for the rest, cut off as they were from retreat to the city and compelled to cast themselves into the Euphrates [!], they slew them all with few exceptions. So great was the multitude of the slain that the flowing stream mingled with blood, changed its color for a considerable distance" (XXVI, 6, 7). Once again the Babylonian Chronicle does not pause to relate any particularly brutal slaughter in connection with the capitulation of Nineveh. But if the operations from 614—612 be regarded as one great offensive movement against the city, and if we include the attack on adjacent cities, even the Chronicle tablet is reminiscent of this brutal destruction; for it records after the capture of the city of Tarbis, "in the district of Nineveh" (Obverse,

11, 26, 27), the Chronicler's dismay at the bloody butchery practised by the Medes. It is quite possible that Diodorus, in his story of the blood-tinged Euphrates, has preserved an account of that terrible slaughter on the banks of the Tigris which provoked a protest of the Chronicler and which Nahum envisioned in his prophetic panorama.

## VII.

Nahum also draws a prophetic picture of the plundering and pillaging that will mark the capture of Nineveh. Apostrophizing the enemies of that city, he shouts: "Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold! For there is none end of the store in glory out of all the pleasant furniture" (chap. 2, 10). After this pillage has subsided, he looks upon Nineveh and predicts: "She is empty and void and waste" (chap. 2, 10).

The booty taken at the fall of Nineveh was so staggering that the Chronicler uses an expression not employed in any of the other campaigns from 616 to 609. In full harmony with Nahum's prophecy he records of the Babylonian and Median troops that "the spoil of the city, *a quantity beyond counting*, they plundered" (Reverse, 1, 45). Striking indeed is the harmony between Nahum's prediction "There is none end of the store" and the Chronicler's record "the spoil of the city, a quantity beyond counting."

## VIII.

Nahum predicts the precipitous flight which follows the capture of the city. "They shall flee away," he declares (chap. 2, 8); and when bystanders seek to quell the panic of flight and cry out: "Stand, stand!" "none shall look back" (chap. 2, 8). Even the crowned heads of Assyria "are as the locusts" and the military leaders "as the great grasshoppers" that "flee away" (chap. 3, 17).

Ample testimony corroborates this flight. Diodorus preserves the tradition which coincides remarkably with the prophet's prediction of Nineveh's royalty and flight. "Sardanapalus," so he relates, ". . . sent away his three sons and two daughters with much treasure into Paphlagonia, to the governor of Kattos, the most loyal of his subjects."

Whatever historical verity may remain in this incident, the Babylonian Chronicle is even more emphatic, for Reverse, 1, 46, though mutilated, indicates that "[the king] of Assyria before the king" (*i. e.*, of Babylonia) escaped. We may well expand the brevity of this notice by believing, with others, that during the siege of the city a number of the Assyrians, including, as Nahum had specifically prophesied, some of the royalty and the military leaders, made their escape in an unexpected moment, and fled as the locusts that are "gone when the sun ariseth" to distant localities, beyond the reach of the besiegers. "Their place is not known where they are."

## IX.

While Nineveh is to be destroyed, it is significant to note that Nahum does not embrace the entire Assyrian nation in this prophecy. After the royalty and the social leaders have fled, the prophet in the last two verses of his book formally addresses "the king of Assyria" (chap. 3, 18). Nineveh, he replies, will be destroyed; but while the capital has fallen, there will still be a king, albeit a *roi fainéant,* whose "nobles shall dwell in the dust" and whose people shall be "scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them" (chap. 3, 18). It is one of the most distinguished services of the Babylonian Chronicle tablet that it substantiates directly the niceties of this remarkable prediction. It may be that one of the leaders who escaped was Ashur-uballit. At least he is mentioned in the annals of the sixteenth year (610 B. C.) as sitting "upon the throne of Assyria" in the city of Harran (Reverse, 1, 60) and in the seventeenth year (1, 66 ff., although the year mark is accidentally missing), when he is specifically called "king of Assyria" and described as an ally of Egypt. Inferences drawn from the Chronicle as well as subsidiary evidences from other sources indicate the weakness of Ashur-uballit's reign, the dispersion of his people, and the general fulfilment of Nahum's dire prediction.

## X.

Nahum's prophecies write the *finis* for the city of Nineveh. Not only will the city be destroyed, but the Lord "will make an utter end" (chap. 1, 9); the posterity of the city will be cut off, for, said Jehovah to Nineveh: "I will make thy grave" (chap. 1, 14); Nineveh shall be "waste" (chap. 2, 10; 3, 7); the voice of its "messenger shall no more be heard" (chap. 2, 14).

With perhaps few exceptions every large city in the Orient has been destroyed; but many of them have been rebuilt and have perpetuated themselves unto our day. It is, however, a crowning achievement of Nahum's poetry that he visualizes the "utter end" of the city which in his day was the metropolis of the Near East. How, the modern reader may well pause to ask, could Nahum know that a city of the wealth and power and dominance of Nineveh could be utterly extirpated as a consequence of the assault which his book describes? How could he know that, unlike the city of Babylon, destroyed by Sennacherib in a campaign that was ruthless even for the Assyrians, yet rebuilt by the Babylonians immediately thereafter, Nineveh would never be restored? The answer is found in the assurance of Amos, chap. 3, 7: "The Lord God will do nothing but He revealeth His secret unto His servants, the prophets."

The Babylonian Chronicler records (Reverse, 1, 45) that the assaulting enemies "[turned] the city into a mount and a ru[in]."

It has remained desolate and unoccupied ever since. About 200 years after its destruction Xenophon passed by its site without realizing that the ruins were the remains of haughty Nineveh. He calls the territory Mespila and knows of its history only that it was a city which remained unconquerable until Zeus made stupid those that dwelt in it (Xenophon, *Anabasis*, III, 10—12). To-day the remains of this world metropolis are covered by the debris of two mounds at Kouyunjik and Nebi Yunus.

Layard, reviewing his discoveries at Nineveh, on the eve of his return to Nineveh writes (*Discoveries at Nineveh*, p. 351): "We have been fortunate enough to acquire the most convincing and lasting evidence of that magnificence and power which made Nineveh the wonder of the ancient world, and her fall the theme of the prophets, as the most signal instance of divine vengeance. Without the evidence that these monuments afford we might also have doubted that the great Nineveh ever existed; so completely 'has she become a desolation and a waste.'"

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The small volume of Nahum's prophecies may have helped to relegate his three chapters into the neglect which the book has often suffered. But those who investigate its prophecies in the light of historical fulfilment must be impressed with "the more sure Word" with which God has blessed us. If in purely historical matters the Bible predictions are minutely vindicated by actual fulfilment, how much more — so the believer concludes — will the promises of salvation and the pledges of heaven be fulfilled through the divine power of that Word which is God's eternal truth! W. A. Maier.

# Die biblische Theologie im Studium des lutherischen Theologen.

Die biblische Theologie als selbständiges Fach ist unter uns bis jetzt kaum berührt worden, und selbst in unsern Seminaren hat man diese Disziplin noch nicht als ein eigenes Studium betrieben. Es ist der biblischen Theologie bei uns gegangen wie der Apologetik, der Ethik, der vergleichenden Religionswissenschaft und andern sogenannten Nebenfächern, die wir allerdings in den verwandten Hauptfächern mit berücksichtigt haben, denen wir aber aus verschiedenen Gründen nicht die Aufmerksamkeit widmen konnten, die sie unter andern Umständen verdienen. Es kann sein, daß durch die Hinzufügung des beschlossenen vierten Jahres genug Zeit und Raum gewonnen werden kann auch für die biblische Theologie.

Denn dieses Fach ist durchaus kein novum in der lutherischen Kirche. Schon im Jahre 1671 machte Sebastian Schmidt in seinem *Collegium Biblicum in quo dicta Veteris et Novi Testamenti iuxta seriem locorum . . . explicantur* einen Versuch, die in der Dogmatik gebräuchlichen dicta probantia in ihrem biblischen Zusammenhange zu erklären. Im nächsten Jahrhundert hatten allerdings der Pietismus und der Rationalismus einen sehr bedenklichen, negativen Einfluß auf die systematischen Disziplinen der lutherischen Kirche: ersterer, weil er die Schrift mehr als ein Gnadenmittel zur Erlangung der Heiligung denn als eine Quelle christlicher Lehre ansah, letzterer, weil er überhaupt das Fundament der Dogmen umstoßen wollte. Die ganze Sachlage wurde am Anfang des letzten Jahrhunderts noch verschlimmert durch den Subjektivismus Schleiermachers, der sonderlich durch seine Stellung zum Neuen Testament den Anlaß gab, daß bald verschiedene Theologen einen Unterschied konstatieren wollten zwischen dem Lehrsystem der verschiedenen Apostel, so daß wir seit jener Zeit den Trugschlüssen des sogenannten Paulinismus, Petrinismus und Johannismus entgegentreten müssen.

In gewissem Sinne ist die biblische Theologie in den letzten hundert Jahren in ein neues Stadium eingetreten, nämlich seit dem Erscheinen von Neanders Buch „Geschichte der Pflanzung der christlichen Kirche", 1832. Man hat sich bemüht, allerdings oft in sehr subjektiver Weise, die Lehre der verschiedenen biblischen Schriftsteller systematisch darzustellen. Sehr oft wurden auch ganze Abschnitte der Bibel behandelt, das Alte Testament, namentlich auch das Neue Testament. In neuerer Zeit finden sich wiederholt Monographien über einzelne Bücher der Schrift. Unter den Männern, die auf diesem Gebiet Hervorragendes geleistet haben, wären zu nennen: in Deutschland Noack, H. Schultz, Dillmann, Smend, B. Weiß, Öhler und König; in England und Amerika Cave, Gardner, Alexander, Toy Bennett, Davidson, Stevens und Weidner.

Wie können wir den Begriff „biblische Theologie" am besten definieren oder erklären, besonders nach gegenwärtigem Usus? Nach Meusel

bezeichnet biblische Theologie denjenigen Teil der Schriftwissenschaft, worin die in der Schrift enthaltene Lehre und Lehrentwicklung in ihrem eigentümlichen Zusammenhange betrachtet, in ihrer tatsächlichen Gegebenheit aufgefaßt und nach ihrer selbständigen Geschlossenheit gegenständlich gemacht wird. M. Kähler definiert den Begriff in *The New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia*, wie folgt: "Biblical theology, or the orderly presentation of the doctrinal contents of Scripture, is a comparatively modern branch of theological science. In general the term expresses not so much the construction of a theology which is Biblical in an especial sense as a method of dealing with the Biblical matter which is midway between exegesis and dogmatics." Und Öhler (Theologie des Alten Testaments) schreibt von dem Begriff biblische Theologie: „Als historische Wissenschaft ist die biblische Theologie von der systematischen Darstellung der biblischen Lehre dadurch unterschieden, daß, während die letztere die aus dem ganzen Verlauf der Offenbarung und der Totalität ihrer Erscheinung sich ergebende Einheit göttlicher Heilswahrheit aufsucht, jene dagegen die Aufgabe hat, die biblische Religion nach ihrer stufenmäßigen Entwicklung und nach der Mannigfaltigkeit ihrer Erscheinungsformen darzustellen" (S. 7).

Wie diese verschiedenen Definitionen und Erklärungen nach Auffassung hervorragender Schriftsteller auf diesem Gebiet zu verstehen sind, kann man vielleicht am besten aus einem Paragraphen in von Hofmanns „Biblische Hermeneutik" sehen, wo der bekannte Erlanger Theolog unter anderm schreibt: „Freilich ist die biblische Theologie in ihrer jeweiligen Gestalt und Verfassung selbst erst wieder nach den biblischen Schriften zu prüfen. Aber dies wiederholt sich bei dem Verhältnis der biblischen Auslegung zu den anderweitigen Disziplinen der Schriftwissenschaft überall und immer wieder, daß ein Wechselverhältnis stattfindet, indem einerseits das vorläufig gewonnene Ergebnis dieser Disziplinen den Ausleger in seinem Geschäft leitet, andererseits aber das Ergebnis seiner Auslegung ihm wieder dazu dient, jene Disziplinen in der Verfassung, zu welcher sie bisher gediehen sind, einer Prüfung zu unterziehen. So ist's also auch mit dem Verhältnis der biblischen Theologie, das heißt, derjenigen Wissenschaft, welche es mit der Geschichte der Heilsoffenbarung und Heilserkenntnis zu tun hat, zu dem Geschäft des Auslegers. Im allgemeinen wird wenigstens auf dem biblisch-theologischen Gebiete ein Ergebnis vorliegen, von welchem sich der Ausleger kann leiten lassen, bis er inne wird, daß das Ergebnis seiner Auslegung mit der derweiligen Gestalt der biblischen Theologie hier oder dort in Widerspruch kommt. Ist seine Auslegung eine sich bewährende, so wird er dann die biblische Theologie reformieren. Aber zuerst muß ihm doch in den Grundzügen die Geschichte der in der Heiligen Schrift beurkundeten göttlichen Wortoffenbarung feststehen, damit er daran

bemesse, was der einem bestimmten Stadium der Heilsgeschichte angehörende Verfasser eines Buchs mit seinen Lesern gemein hatte an religiöser Erkenntnis und bei diesen voraussetzte. Denn nur dadurch wird der Ausleger imstande sein, eine Schrift so zu lesen, wie der Verfasser erwartete, daß sie gelesen werde. Verabsäumt es der Ausleger, sich in die heilsgeschichtliche Stellung und Erkenntnis derjenigen hineinzudenken, für welche eine Schrift geschrieben ist, so wird er vieles für möglich halten, daß es geschrieben steht, was in Wahrheit nicht geschrieben werden konnte" (S. 142 f.).

Aus diesen Ausführungen erkennen wir, daß der Begriff biblische Theologie nicht so scharf abgegrenzt ist, wie wir es gerne sehen möchten, um diese Disziplin in rechter Weise anwenden zu können. Aber in lutherischen Kreisen, sonderlich in unserm Lande, neigt man sich am meisten der Erklärung zu, nach welcher die biblische Theologie mitten zwischen Exegese und Dogmatik steht. So hoch wir die Dogmatik einschätzen, so vermeiden wir doch den Ausdruck Dogmatica est regina und ziehen es vor, dem Wahlspruch zu folgen Exegetica est regina. Das heißt mit andern Worten: Unsere Theologie, die Lehre, die wir in Wort und Schrift vortragen, muß ganz und gar auf Gottes Wort beruhen. Für uns gilt es ohne jede Einschränkung: Quod non est biblicum, non est theologicum. Andererseits müssen wir uns aber auch hüten, daß wir die biblische Theologie nicht zu stark mit der Geschichte verbinden und somit auf seiten der Religionsgeschichtler irren. Wir würden uns kaum zu den Ausführungen von Van Oosterzee bekennen, der in seiner Schrift *The Theology of the New Testament* den folgenden Passus hat: "The distinction between the Biblical theology of the New Testament and Christian dogmatics — which are not seldom confounded to their common injury — begins already to be clear to us. Both parts of theological science have their peculiar character. That of Christian dogmatics is historico-philosophic; that of the Biblical theology of the New Testament, on the contrary, is purely historic. The former investigates, not what the Christian Church in general or one of its parts acknowledges as truth, but, above all, what in the domain of Christian faith must really be regarded as truth. The Biblical theology of the New Testament, on the other hand, inquires only what is adduced as truth by the New Testament writers." (Übersetzung von Evans, S. 3.) Während es allerdings wahr ist, daß die geschichtliche Seite eine bedeutende Rolle spielt, so steht die biblische Theologie als theologische Disziplin doch der biblischen Philologie näher als der Religionsgeschichte.

Für unsere Zwecke als lutherische Theologen würde sich daher die folgende Definition als passender erweisen: Biblische Theologie ist die systematische Zusammenstellung der Lehren, die sich in einem Buch oder in einem Abschnitt der Schrift finden, und zwar auf Grund einer sach-

gemäßen und adäquaten Exegese. Die biblische Theologie ist demnach nicht deduktiv, wie die Dogmatik, die in der Theologie Lehrsätze aufstellt und diese dann mit Schriftworten beweist, sondern sie ist induktiv: sie geht aus von den Schriftworten selber und legt die Lehren dar, wie sie sich in einem Satz, in einem Passus, in einem ganzen Kapitel oder in einem ganzen Buch finden. Freilich müssen dabei die verwandten Disziplinen mit hinzugezogen werden. Daß z. B. die in Betracht kommende Exegese auf gesunden hermeneutischen Grundsätzen aufgebaut sein muß, versteht sich für einen lutherischen Theologen von selbst. Ebenso selbstverständlich ist es auch, daß er tüchtig Isagogik treibt, um in seiner ganzen Exegese Veranlassung und Zweck der betreffenden Schrift immer vor Augen zu behalten; denn sonst wird seine Auslegung leicht Eisegese statt Exegese, und die Lehren, die er in einem Passus zu finden meint, sind tatsächlich nicht da. Auch muß die Archäologie und die Geschichte zu ihrem Recht kommen, weil sonst, besonders bei bildlichen Redeweisen, die ganze Auffassung einer Stelle verkehrt sein kann. Kurz, die biblische Theologie stellt die Frage: Welche Lehre findet sich in einem gegebenen Satz, in einem gewissen Passus, in einem Kapitel, in einem Buch der Schrift auf Grund einer nüchternen Exegese? Wenn die Arbeit auf diese Frage richtig ausfällt, dann läßt sich die Lehre einer Stelle oder eines Kapitels oder eines Buches zusammenstellen, und damit beginnt die Systematik.

Welchen Wert hat nun die biblische Theologie im Studium des lutherischen Theologen? Um dies recht zu verstehen, können wir etwa einige Vorfragen stellen. Welche Voraussetzungen müssen erfüllt werden, wenn wir wirklich den größten Segen von dieser Disziplin haben wollen? Die Antwort auf diese Frage ist von größter Wichtigkeit, da sich an ihr als Prüfstein die ganze theologische Einstellung eines Pastors ausweist. Die Hauptvoraussetzung ist selbstredend diese, daß ein Theolog an der Verbalinspiration und Irrtumslosigkeit der Schrift festhält, denn ohne diese Gewißheit wird alle seine Arbeit an und mit der Schrift sich als Fehlschlag erweisen. Alle Gelehrsamkeit der Welt, und gerade auch auf dem Gebiet der biblischen Philologie, ist völlig unzureichend, wenn sie nicht mit dem wörtlich eingegebenen Gotteswort hantiert. Wer nicht in heiliger Ehrfurcht jedes Wort, ja, jeden Buchstaben, als Produkt des Heiligen Geistes ansieht, wird weder auf dem Gebiet der biblischen Exegese noch auf dem der biblischen Theologie etwas leisten können, das bleibenden Wert hat. Hiermit ist aber eng verbunden das Festhalten an der Einheit der Schrift. Wer da meint, die einzelnen Bücher der Schrift haben sich nur zufällig so zusammengefunden, wie wir sie jetzt im Konvolut der kanonischen Schriften kennen, der kann unmöglich den goldenen Faden finden, der sich durch die ganze Schrift hindurchzieht. Wer nicht in der einen oder andern Weise das Wort anerkennt: Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet, der kann nicht in Wahrheit biblische Theologie treiben, denn es

geht ihm a priori das Verständnis ab, das für die rechte christliche Theologie unumgänglich notwendig ist. Wer nicht erkennt, daß derselbe Geist durch den Seher Johannes geredet hat, der auch die Schriften eines Jesaias, eines Daniel und eines Sacharja diktiert hat, der bemüht sich vergeblich, die Schriftlehre adäquat vorzutragen.

Eine andere Vorfrage ist diese: Ist der Theolog auch wirklich bereit, in wirklich intensiver Weise die Disziplinen durchzustudieren, die er für diese Arbeit gebraucht? Das Gebiet der biblischen Philologie ist allein so umfassend, daß es die ganze Zeit eines Mannes in Anspruch nehmen könnte. Denken wir nur an die Arbeit eines Milligan, eines Deißmann, eines Robertson, eines Kittel und anderer, und wir werden uns sagen, daß wir mit intensiver und systematischer Energie uns an dies schwierige Gebiet heranmachen müssen. Dann haben wir das umfassende Gebiet der biblischen Isagogik, der biblischen Archäologie, der heiligen Geschichte! Da heißt es wahrlich die Zeit auskaufen und ausnutzen. Ein wirklicher Theolog darf unter keinen Umständen rasten, noch viel weniger auf vermeintlich erworbenen Lorbeeren ausruhen wollen.

Hiermit ist aber auch schon unsere letzte Frage zum großen Teil beantwortet, nämlich diese: Wie können wir uns in dies ungeheure und so überaus wichtige Gebiet hineinarbeiten? Zunächst dadurch, daß wir uns immer wieder daran erinnern, daß *unsere eigentliche Hauptaufgabe das Lehren des Wortes Gottes* ist. Es ist ein verhältnismäßig leichtes Ding, sich einen theologischen Wortschatz anzueignen, auf Grund dessen man mit geringer Zungenfertigkeit eine halbstündige Predigt halten kann. Aber ein ander Ding ist es, daß man wirklich so ganz und gar im Worte Gottes lebt, daß man gleichsam wie ein Gefäß mit dem Inhalt des Wortes Gottes angefüllt ist und dann diesen Inhalt in der Predigt und in der Ansprache, am Krankenbett und bei der Beichtanmeldung recht verwendet. Wir müssen uns hüten vor dem geschäftsmäßigen, professionellen, seichten Gebrauch des Wortes Gottes und statt dessen seine Tiefen durchforschen, um einem jeden unserer Gemeindeglieder unter allen Umständen das ihm Gebührende, das für ihn Passende zu geben.

Es ist darum nötig, daß wir uns ein Studienprogramm entwerfen und uns mit unerbittlicher Strenge gegen uns selbst daran halten. Das Durchforschen der Schrift, das der HErr den Juden anbefiehlt, muß bei uns so selbstverständlich sein wie das Genießen des täglichen Brotes. Ein lutherischer Theolog wird selbstverständlich nie ohne seine Bibel sein, weder zu Hause noch fern von Hause, denn in seiner Stellung als Haushalter über Gottes Geheimnisse ist es für ihn unbedingt geboten, daß er sich täglich darein vertieft. Aber für einen, der die Grundsprachen der Schrift gelernt hat, ist es ebenso selbstverständlich, daß er täglich sein griechisches und sein hebräisches Testament studiert. Und es genügt nicht, daß er nur kursorisch liest, wenn auch darin großer Wert ist. Eben

das Forſchen in der Schrift iſt unbedingt geboten, das fortwährende Vergleichen der verſchiedenen Texte, die dieſelbe Lehre behandeln, das gründliche Unterſuchen der Formen, der grammatiſchen Konſtruktion und aller andern in Betracht kommenden Tatſachen. Robertſon hat mit Recht einige Kapitel ſeines ausgezeichneten Buches *The Minister and His Greek New Testament* mit den Überſchriften verſehen: "Pictures in Prepositions", "Sermons in Greek Tenses" und dergleichen mehr. Und vergeſſen wir hierbei auch nicht das alte lateiniſche Wort: Nulla dies sine linea. Was man beim Studium mit der Feder in der Hand fixiert, wird in der Regel zweimal ſo leicht im Gedächtnis haften. Und hat man es erſt einmal ſo weit gebracht, dann werden auch die andern Studien auf dem Gebiete der Iſagogik, der Geſchichte, der Archäologie keine unüberwindlichen Schwierigkeiten bieten.

P. E. Kretzmann.

## Frederick August Craemer.

(1812—1891.)

**Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently.1) — *Jer. 48, 10.***

Some time ago, in conversation with one of our retired ministers who had received his theological training under Craemer at Springfield, Craemer was referred to as the "forgotten man of the Missouri Synod." Of course, this is not true of those who knew the man who served as the head of our Practical Seminary for over forty years. They have not forgotten him, especially not those who were trained for the ministry by *"Onkel"* Craemer. Their eyes light up when they think of him, and what they say of him is spoken in a tone of profound love and admiration. This fact alone bespeaks the greatness of the man and the power of his unique personality. But forty-five years have elapsed since Craemer was gathered to his fathers, and the number of those who knew him has grown very small and is dwindling from year to year. When these have all passed on, shall Craemer be forgotten? Shall he be only a name to most of us? Is there nothing in the life and activity of this man, who stood in the front ranks of the fathers with Walther, Wyneken, and Sihler, that may benefit the present generation and those that are yet to come?

As the golden anniversary of our esteemed colleague Dr. E. Engelder falls in the same year in which our Practical Seminary is celebrating its ninetieth anniversary, and as Dr. Engelder also served as professor of that institution for a number of years, we felt that we could honor our colleague in no better way than by writing

1) Marginal reading.

a brief appreciation of Frederick August Craemer and thus make at least a small contribution toward keeping his memory alive among us. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation," Heb. 13, 7.

In Dr. W. Sihler's memorial [2] to Prof. A. Wolter,[3] who had died of the cholera, we are informed that Wolter had pasted on his standing-desk a paper inscribed with the words of Jer. 48, 10: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently." Dr. L. Fuerbringer writes [4] that Craemer had the same sentence written on his desk.[5] Other great lights in the Church have had similar mottoes. Martin of Tours labored according to the sentence *"Non recuso laborem";* David Brainerd, "There is no greater satisfaction on earth than joy in God and a life in the service of the Master"; John Eliot, "Prayer and pains through faith in Christ will do anything." Craemer's motto certainly characterizes his career most strikingly.

True, not at the outset. Though brought up by a strict father and a godly mother in his native Kleinlangheim, Bavaria, and matriculating at the University of Erlangen as a *studiosus theologiae et philologiae,* Craemer at first was not a true Christian, but a rationalist; and at the university he became so deeply involved in the patriotic movement of his day to restore the old "Holy Roman Empire of German Nations" that he was arrested and imprisoned for six years for participation in the famous *Frankfurter Attentat,* and remained under police surveillance even after obtaining his freedom in 1839. This experience, as trying as it was, had no visible effect upon his inner life. But when, upon continuing his studies at the philological seminary of Professor Thiersch in Munich, the Lord laid him low with sickness, that proved to be his "road to Damascus." The seed sown by his pious mother bore fruitage. He became a devout and consecrated follower of Jesus Christ.

He was twenty-nine years old and eager to devote his life to the service of his Master, but there was as yet no indication of what his future field of labor would be. He was first engaged as tutor in a nobleman's family and had the opportunity to travel to Bohemia and Italy. He then received an appointment as tutor in England in the home of Lord Lovelace, in Devonshire, whose wife was the

2) *Lutheraner,* Sept. 18, 1849.

3) Professor at the Practical Seminary in Fort Wayne, from Nov., 1846, to Aug., 1849.

4) *Lehre und Wehre,* 68, 35.

5) It may have been the same desk, as Craemer was Wolter's real successor. A. Biewend, who had been called from his pastorate in Washington, D. C., to succeed Wolter, served only from Nov. 20, 1849, to Sept. 25, 1850, and then went to St. Louis to become professor of philosophy at our Seminary there. Biewend died April 10, 1858.

daughter of the famous Lord Byron. In this family he had occasion to witness for his faith; he refused to agree with the liberal religious principles of Lady Lovelace, a Unitarian. He resigned his place and planned to return to Germany. However, he had in the mean time won the favor of Sir Henry Drummond, cofounder and patron of the Irvingites, who got him an appointment as private tutor at the University of Oxford, with prospects of a professorship at that institution. Craemer might have become a renowned professor at this world-famous school because of his extraordinary linguistic ability; but his staunch Lutheran faith and his intense devotion to his Savior forced him to testify against the Oxford Movement, which, under the leadership of Pusey, Newman, and others, was disturbing the Anglican Church at the time. The result of his outspoken criticism was that nothing came of a professorship. Oxford did not get the services of Craemer because the Lord of the Church had need of him elsewhere.

To Craemer in England had come the news of a movement that was to be of great importance to the Lutheran Church in America and especially for our own Synod. Wm. Loehe of Neuendettelsau,[6] in response to Wyneken's *Notschrei,* had laid the foundation of a training-school for spiritual workers among the scattered German immigrants in the Middle West of the United States. The first missioners[7] had been sent to America. Others were being prepared to follow.[8] Loehe needed still more, particularly men thoroughly trained theologically and able to take the lead in the work. Friends had advised Craemer to offer his services to Loehe, who gratefully accepted him and, recognizing Craemer's ability, decided to use him for the establishment of a heathen mission among the American Indians. Loehe's plan in this respect, though not original with him,[9] was a thoroughly practical one. He intended to combine colonization and heathen missions by planting a colony of Christians in close proximity to the Indian reservations so that the pastor of the Christian congregation would serve also as missionary to the red men and the members of his flock would by their Christian life give to the barbarians a continuous practical demonstration of the worth of the Christian faith.

It would take us far beyond the limits set for this article to

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6) *"Dessen Name gerade in der Springfielder Anstalt stets in Ehren gehalten werden soll, der die allergroessten Verdienste um unsre Kirche und Synode in ihren Anfangszeiten hatte."* L. Fuerbringer, in *Lehre und Wehre,* 68, 7.

7) Adam Ernst and George Burger in 1842.

8) O. Hattstaedt and A. Saupert followed in 1843.

9) The Moravians of Herrnhut had employed similar methods in their foreign mission-work.

go into detail to describe the events that ensued, the careful preparations, Craemer's call and ordination to serve the emigrant colony as pastor, the voyage to America,[10] his marriage,[11] the journey up the Hudson to Albany by sailing vessel, from Albany to Buffalo by railroad,[12] thence to Michigan, and the planting of the Frankenmuth colony, about fifteen miles from Saginaw, not far from the reservation of the Ojibwa Indians.

Craemer in all the activities connected with as difficult a task as this is an inspiring example of self-sacrificing devotion to his Master and to his high purpose not to do the work of his Lord negligently. Much praise has been given to F. C. D. Wyneken for his unselfish labors in behalf of the spiritual and temporal needs of the scattered Germans in Northern Indiana, Western Ohio, and Southern Michigan, — and we would not detract one iota from the credit that belongs to Wyneken, by the grace of God, — but the task that confronted Craemer was a greater one. To organize a colony in the forest primeval of the Saginaw Valley, a colony composed of young Bavarian men and women who had no conception of what confronted them, whose first and most natural reaction was an intense homesickness for the Fatherland and a longing to return when they found themselves forced to construct the rudest, most primitive huts for shelter and to hew down the giants of the forest for clearings on which to raise a few vegetables for food, when they fell a prey to thirst and fever for lack of proper food and water, when they suffered from the bitter cold of a Michigan winter and other privations, — that was a task of no mean proportions. Craemer, however, animated by his intrepid zeal for the Lord's work, went at it undeterred. He was at once leader, pastor, father, physician, counselor, and comforter. Within nine months a colony was at least primitively organized.[13] Then, in addition to his manifold labors, he turned his attention to the neighboring heathen Indians. Soon he was preach-

10) In the spring of 1845.

11) To Dorothea Benthien of Achim, June 10, in St. Matthew's Church, New York, by Rev. Stohlmann.

12) With a narrow escape from injury and death in a collision that occurred about a mile from Buffalo.

13) "No one," wrote a colonist, "can have an adequate conception of the appearance of a North American landscape. No path through the forests. Through brush and extensive morasses, over fallen trees, which form the only passageways through the swampy land, the path leads to the settlement. A dead silence reigns in these woods, broken only now and then by the weird screeching of the owls, the barking of the squirrels, or the cry of wild four-footed beasts. After one has waded, climbed, stumbled, almost to exhaustion, one comes in view of the colony. And the settlement — what a doleful sight! A cleared space, surrounded by a rough rail fence. In the center of it a miserable cabin, built of rough-hewn logs. The most poverty-stricken village in Germany contains palaces compared with this."

ing to them by means of an interpreter, sometimes traveling fifty to seventy miles on foot. He learned their language. He translated Luther's Catechism into Ojibwa. He took a score of Indian children into his own home in order to civilize them and to have them attend his Christian day-school. The work grew apace. There were converts, young and old. Edward Baierlein [14]) was sent over to assist. A Christian Indian village, Bethany, was founded. The future looked promising. That this mission, for various reasons, did not reach the proportions of, nor endure as long as, those established by Eliot, Brainerd, Zeisberger, and others, was no fault of Craemer's and Baierlein's, and their work will always remain as one of the bright spots in the rather tragic annals of Christian missions among the American Indians.

During this time Craemer had other problems to solve and other labors to perform. The Michigan Synod, which he and others had joined, proved to be Lutheran in name only. The connection had to be severed.[15]) A new synod was in process of organization among the Saxons in Missouri and the other Loehe missioners, who had withdrawn from the Ohio Synod.[16]) Craemer had not attended the first meeting between the Saxons and the Loehe men,[17]) as he was still a member of the Michigan Synod; but he did attend the second [18]) and the organization meeting [19]) and became a charter member of the Missouri Synod and the secretary of its first mission board.

His Synod soon called him to serve in another capacity, to the position of professor at the Practical Seminary [20]) in Fort Wayne, which institution he served most faithfully until his death.[21])

Craemer's service at this theological school naturally divides itself into three periods according to its location: at Fort Wayne, Ind., 1850—1861;[22]) at St. Louis, Mo., 1861—1874, in conjunction with the Theoretical Seminary; at Springfield, Ill., 1875—1891.

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14) In 1847. Baierlein labored until 1853, when he left to become a missionary in India for the Leipzig Mission Society. He had been sent to America only as a temporary supply.

15) June 25, 1846.

16) At a meeting in Cleveland, O., Sept., 1845.

17) At St. Louis, May, 1846.

18) At Fort Wayne, July, 1846.

19) At Chicago, April 25, 1847.

20) Founded by Loehe and Wucherer through Dr. Wm. Sihler in the fall of 1846 and presented to the Missouri Synod by Loehe on Sept. 8, 1847.

21) St. Lorenz Church in Frankenmuth set a fine example by allowing its beloved pastor to accept the call to Fort Wayne. Seventy families escorted Craemer for seven miles, from Frankenmuth to Bridgeport, before they took a tearful farewell.

22) During which time the Teachers' Seminary and the English Academy were added to the institution.

During these forty-one years, Craemer devoted his many talents whole-heartedly to the training of men for the ministry. It was self-evident that his strong character should impress itself upon the entire seminary. Having disciplined himself, he knew how to exercise a judicious discipline among his students. Strict in exacting obedience to the *Hausordnung,* he was nevertheless not legalistic, but truly evangelical in his dealings with those who had transgressed the rules. It was an incalculable blessing to our Synod that it had at the head of its Practical Seminary a man who, like Walther in St. Louis, loved the pure Gospel as embodied in the great Confessions of the Lutheran Church and who was able to instil in his pupils a burning zeal for the preaching and defense of the *reine Lehre.* Though he was no outstanding pulpit orator, and though his sermons were perhaps somewhat stereotyped in his later years,[23]) yet he knew how to develop men for the pulpit who could preach the Word with power. His diligence in office was extreme. He was ever ready to take on more work if it would result in sending out more well-trained workers into the Lord's vineyard. Long after he should have been relieved of his duties because of increasing age and failing health, he carried on, forcing his weakened body by sheer will-power to obey, until he broke down after having installed the successor[24]) whom Synod had finally called to take his place. His end came soon afterwards, on May 3, 1891. He had performed the work of the Lord diligently to the last.

Let us not forget Craemer. May his memory live among us and his example of diligent, painstaking devotion to sound Lutheranism spur us on to greater zeal and fidelity in our own spheres!

It may not be on the mountain's height
Or over the stormy sea;
It may not be at the battle's front
My Lord will have need of me;
But if in His wisdom He will call
To paths that I do not know,
I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in Thine,
"I'll go where Thou will'st me to go."
I'll go where Thou will'st me to go, dear Lord,
O'er mountain or plain or sea;
I'll say what Thou want'st me to say, dear Lord;
I'll be what Thou want'st me to be.

W. G. Polack.

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23) At the right time he did rise to the heights of true oratory. Of his address at Walther's funeral in 1887, Dr. Fuerbringer writes: *"Eine fast unuebersehbare Menge fuellte das grosse Gotteshaus bis auf den letzten Stehplatz. Totenstille herrschte. Da steht Craemer vor dem Sarge am Altar, und mit hocherhobenen Haenden bringt er seinen ganzen, ich moechte sagen, heilig-leidenschaftlichen Schmerz zum Ausdruck in den Worten, die durch die Versammlung ertoenen: 'Mein Vater, mein Vater, Wagen Israels und seine Reiter!'" Lehre und Wehre,* 68, 38.

24) Prof. R. Pieper was installed on April 8, 1891.

# The Blast that Wrecked the Pope's Power.

Some years ago a writer in the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY (I, 571—581) pointed out that the dynamic of Luther's Reformation was his clear and powerful preaching of justification by faith alone. By his own experience Luther, by the grace of God, had recognized that the *sola fide* alone can give positive assurance to the sinner of God's pardon and his own eternal salvation; what he had found he taught and preached to others who were seeking certainty for the eternity beyond the grave and failed to find it in the work-righteousness of the papal teaching; and so Luther became the Reformer of the Church. To this day the *sola fide* is the distinguished mark of the Church of the Reformation.

There remains, however, a question. The student of Reformation history must be struck by the evident helplessness of Pope and hierarchy against Luther. There is much talk, but little action. How was it that Luther escaped the fate of John Huss, of Girolamo Savonarola, of John Wyclif, whom only an early death saved from the same end, execution at the hand of Rome? How did the reforming movement of Luther escape the fate of previous efforts, so that the results have become permanent?

Various explanations are advanced. No one has the hardihood to suggest a lack of will on the part of the curia; there is no indication of repentance for past ill deeds and desire to deal justly with this Reformer. But one advances the political situation; his desire to influence the election of a new emperor and later on to curb the power of the emperor bound the Pope's hands and made it inexpedient to antagonize the Elector of Saxony. But the Pope had formerly found ways and means to bring even emperors and kings to terms; think of Gregory VII and Henry IV, of Innocent III and John Lackland; even Boniface VIII was victorious in the end, though he did not live to see it; his Bull *Unam Sanctam* was indeed recalled by Clement VI; the three great Reform Councils went on record maintaining that the council is superior to the Pope and then failed utterly and absolutely in enforcing that principle; the Vatican Council of 1512—1517 was evidently no more than the rubber stamp of the curia; Leo X's bull *Pastor Aeternus,* reinstating the *Unam Sanctum,* was ratified. — Others speak of extortion practised by the priesthood, of other abuses which were exceeding all previous records; but while great depravity in the Church is admitted by all, it is not so certain that conditions were much worse than ever before; and even if they were, such situations had been changed before, and the danger of a reduction of papal power had been averted. — It is claimed that the increasing enlightenment of the people reduced their fear of the papal power and so curbed the effectiveness of the Pope's influence; historical research, above all, had sadly undermined the prestige of

the Papacy. But there had been previous Renaissance movements, which had been wiped out effectively when they interfered with papal prerogatives, so that we may be emboldened to say: It is due to Luther's Reformation that this Renaissance movement was permanent, not *vice versa*. And since the days of Dante and Marsilius of Padua scholars knew that there had been a time when there was no Pope; and fifty years before Luther Lorenzo Valla had proved that the Pope's claim to temporal power rested on forged documents. It is not denied that all these reasons contributed their part to Luther's success; but none of them nor all of them are sufficient. There must be something else. Belloc, the mouthpiece of English Catholics, suggests (*How the Reformation Happened*): Action against Luther was delayed until it was too late because the Church was thoroughly corrupt and knew it was so; hence the gears jammed. But why should that cause the gears to jam? Even though guilt was admitted, — which I do not find, — there is not the least indication of repentance, as Belloc himself acknowledges (*l. c.*). Nor were the gears rusty from disuse: The Dominican inquisition was restlessly active; not a year passed without victims. Will and intention was not lacking, as noted; as a matter of fact, the machinery was set in motion against Luther at once; within nine months after the posting of the Ninety-five Theses Luther was formally and officially accused of heresy by the constituted authorities of the Church and cited to appear before the papal court.

Why was he not forced to go? It is evident that the Pope lacked the power to carry out his threat, a power which he had possessed and exercised up to this time; what made that power fail in Luther's case? — The ultimate reason, of course, is God's will; that is the ultimate reason for everything that happens in history. But our God, as a rule, works through natural means; and it is the church historian's business to try to find and point out the means by which God accomplishes His desired purpose. What had happened at this time to jam the gears, to paralyze the power of the Pope?

The entire power of the hierarchy rested on one claim; Dr. Walther, in a sermon for Reformation Day, states it thus (*Brosamen*, 70, 594 f.): "Durch das Papsttum wurde die Kirche in einen Priesterstaat verwandelt, in welchem der roemische Bischof mit seinem unermesslichen Heer von Bischoefen, Priestern und Moenchen die ganze Christenheit als ihr unumschraenkter Gebieter beherrschte, Papst, Bischof und Priester zu befehlen, der Laie nur zu gehorchen, *der Priester die Gewalt der Himmelsschluessel als sein ausschliessliches Privilegium zu verwalten und der Laie die Seligkeit als eine Gnade der Geistlichkeit zu erwarten und von ihr zu erkaufen hatte.*" In other words, the power of Pope and hierarchy did not rest on any donation of Constantine, not on any documents, forged or otherwise, but on their alleged authority to open or close heaven at will, ar-

bitrarily. Sacramentalism and Sacerdotalism are the terms commonly used to designate this principle; no salvation without the Sacraments; and the Sacraments are valid only when administered by a validly ordained priest. When a priest therefore excommunicated a man, excluded him from the use of the Sacraments, heaven was closed to that man; when, by order of the Pope, the priests ceased to function in a certain land (the interdict), heaven was closed to the people of that land. The force of this allegation lay of course not in the fact that the Church taught so, but in this, that all the world believed it. Hence the fearful, the never-failing effect of the interdict in the Middle Ages; it rested on the alleged — and conceded — power of the priest, by administration or denial of the Sacraments, to open or close heaven.

An example will again clarify this. John Lackland refused to receive Stephen Langton, whom the Pope had consecrated archbishop of Canterbury; he swore "by God's teeth," if any one dared to put his kingdom under the interdict, he would send them packing to Rome and confiscate their goods; if they were the subjects of the Pope, he would pluck out their eyes, slit their noses, and so return them to the Pope. Brave words! — Calmly, slowly, relentlessly, Rome went into action. This was in 1205. In 1208 the interdict was laid on England, in Passion-week. At midnight the bells tolled; the priests entered the churches by torchlight, burned the wafers, covered crosses and images and pictures, and hid the relics and sacred vessels. The sentence was proclaimed from the altars amid silence, broken only by gasps and tears; when all had left, the doors were closed, none knowing when they might reopen.

It is difficult, it is impossible, for us fully to put ourselves in the place of people who for generations and centuries had been trained in the belief that their salvation was bound to the Sacraments administered by their priest when suddenly all church activity ceased. From childhood on they had seen the doors opening for Mass every morning; shut doors met them now; no Sunday services; no festivals; one day like the other, one week like the other. Babies were baptized hastily and not in church (priests were always permitted to administer emergency baptism; sometimes one or the other Sacrament was permitted), and mothers wondered whether it was sufficient to save their children. Confession was refused; there was no absolution, no Communion; men walked about with sins unforgiven. The sick had no hope, the dead, even if they received the last Sacrament, were flung into unconsecrated earth; all was uncertain. Lovers were not married by the priest; if they lived together, it was an unhallowed union. It had its influence on social and commercial life. A great silence fell on the land. Trade suffered; booths were dismantled; streets were deserted; ships no longer stopped at English quays. "Men felt suddenly the power of that unknown hand in far

Rome. It reached over sea and land; the Pope, a thousand miles and more away, had but to whisper, and every tiny hamlet in England heard with trembling." (*A. T. Sheppard.*) — Five years John Lackland held out; I believe that was a record; then he yielded; 1213 he surrendered England to the Pope, to receive it back as a fief against the promise of an annual tribute of 1,000 marks.

Always, monotonously, the story is repeated. Brave words are spoken; a great show of resistance is made. Unhurriedly Rome goes into action; Rome is never in a hurry; what it does not get this year, it will get next year or the next decade or the next century. Under steady, relentless pressure, sooner or later the breaking point is reached, and Rome is victorious.

Then came Dr. Eck's challenge of Carlstadt and his attack on Luther. For the Leipzig Debate Luther studied the evidence, or lack of evidence, for the primacy of the Pope. The result was laid down in Luther's *Appeal to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* and in his letter on *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church.* Clearly and convincingly he proved that the sacramental system is a popish structure, the interdict "the devil's own invention," man's salvation not bound to the priest's activity; each one must be saved by his own acceptance, through faith, of Christ's merits. People heard and read and believed; and there fell the fear of the clergy, and therewith the power of the Papacy, of the interdict, etc.

Why did not the Pope lay the interdict on Saxony? He was too wise. Fifty years earlier it would have been successful; now it would have been a public laughing-stock. True, at Worms practically all Germany stood behind Luther. Cajetan advised making an end of Luther and his work; Carl von Miltitz knew Germany better; Belloc calls him a "diplomatic June-bug"; Catholics never tire in telling us that he drank too much; but he had his sober moments, and in such a moment he said: Not with 25,000 Swiss soldiers would he dare to take Luther through Germany to Rome. And yet — if Luther had not shattered the universal belief in Sacramentalism and Sacerdotalism, nothing in the world could have saved him from the fate of John Huss and his work from the fate of Wyclif's reform in England.

THEO. HOYER.

## How will Radio-Preaching Affect the Regular Pulpit of Our Church?

Fundamentally Christian preaching is not subject to change. Its basis is the same from generation to generation: the inspired, immutable Word of God; its message dare never be anything but the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Any preaching that does not strictly adhere to these essential principles will invariably result in dechristianizing, or paganizing, the sermon.

And yet, as far as outward forms and presentation of the message are concerned, the preaching of the Church has always been subject to change. Sometimes the change was gradual, almost imperceptible; at other times it was swift, abrupt, and revolutionary. Sometimes the changes were for the better, while at other times they were for the worse, and very decidedly so. It has happened that the entire complexion of Christian preaching in a given country was changed within a single generation, without, however, sacrificing its Scriptural character in the least. In such cases the message remained the same, the unchangeable Gospel, but the emphasis of that message, especially in its practical applications, and also the homiletical form experienced a thoroughgoing change, an adjustment to prevailing conditions. This was obviously due to the fact that the men who molded the preaching of their age lived in intimate and intelligent relation to their own times and endeavored to fashion their sermons in such a way as to achieve the greatest possible success when preaching to their parishioners. Viewed from this angle, there has been a continuous change in the Church's preaching from the days of Jesus down to the present century. And this change was not only legitimate and salutary, but altogether necessary. It must continue to-day if our preaching is not to become stereotyped, obsolete, and ineffective.

At this point it is interesting to note that the history of preaching plainly indicates that the alert preacher, who is intent upon accommodating his message to the problems of the day and the requirements of the particular group to which he is ministering, is influenced in his preaching not so much by the theory of homiletics taught in the classroom as by the example of successful men in the pulpit. Nothing is easier than to trace the influence of great preachers upon the preaching of their own and succeeding generations. Often one man serves as a pattern and inspiration for thousands of other preachers of the Gospel. They adopt his sermons as models. They regard his delivery as exemplary. Realizing that the man in question achieved success largely by virtue of the methods he employed, they make an honest attempt to follow the same methods, hoping thereby to attain to at least some measure of success.

Bearing all this in mind, we proceed to answer the question at the head of this article: *How will Radio-preaching Affect the Regular Pulpit of Our Church?* Mark well, we are not asking whether radio-preaching will affect the regular pulpit of our Church; for in the light of the history of preaching it is beyond dispute that it will. Hence the only question that can come into consideration is what these effects will be. We dare never lose sight of the fact that radio-preaching is not a short-lived innovation, a mere fad, but one of the most important developments in the history of Christian preaching since the days of the Reformation. It occupies a prominent and permanent place in the program of the modern Church. No invention

since the invention of the printing-press has done as much, or can do as much, as the radio is doing to speed the fulfilment of the Savior's prophecy: "This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come," Matt. 24, 14. The possibilities of the radio sermon are so vast that even the most vivid imagination cannot forecast the extent to which they may yet be developed. All this, together with the fact that thousands, even millions of persons, living in widely separated areas, can simultaneously listen to the same radio sermon, whereas other sermons are delivered to small groups gathered within the walls of their own churches, — all this gives the radio sermon a more conspicuous position in the Church's program than is occupied by any other type of religious address.

It is evident therefore that the radio sermon of the present day is destined to have a far-reaching influence upon our Lutheran pulpit. Our men are broadcasting from local stations and over nation-wide chains. Naturally they are making systematic efforts to perfect their technique as radio preachers. In addition, our people, who regularly hear the radio sermons delivered by able preachers of our own Church and of other denominations, are gradually forming their opinions as to what constitutes a good sermon by what they hear over the air, never taking into consideration of course that the radio sermon is in a class by itself and can never, because of its peculiar limitations, take the place of the regular sermon in public worship. Finally, many ambitious preachers, especially among the younger clergy, choose one or more eminent radio preachers as their patterns and try to learn from them how to make and deliver a good, soul-stirring sermon to their own people. In the face of these facts no one can deny that our preaching is eventually going to be affected by the radio.

Would it not, in view of this plain fact, be wise to take time by the forelock and to make an effort to determine at least in a general way what the reactions of radio-preaching upon our pulpits may be? Why always wait till things have happened and then begin to trace the relation of cause and effect? In regard to the preaching of the Church we do that very efficiently in our historical studies; but one cannot escape the thought that it would have been far better if the effects of certain conditions had been more accurately forecast and the remedy applied forthwith before the cause had matured into the effect. In this way much good could have been preserved for oncoming generations, and many bitter experiences would have been prevented. Applying this thought to the matter before us, we may record it as our opinion that it is high time that the preachers of our Church give the question which is under discussion in this article their serious attention.

In order to direct the attention of our pastors to this question and to stimulate a friendly exchange of opinions with regard to it in

conferences and otherwise, the present writer is submitting the following thoughts, which have come to him while pondering over the matter. They may furnish the incentive for a more thoroughgoing investigation.

1.

There can be no doubt about it that in certain respects the reactions of radio-preaching upon the regular pulpit of our Church will be wholesome and that they will result in some very definite improvements.

The first thing that comes to mind in this connection is the well-directed tendency of good Christian radio-preaching to bring the sermon more definitely and intimately in relation to the problems of modern man. In general, there has always been much stereotyped, dry, and mechanical preaching, a spiritless and purposeless rehearsal of great Bible truths which had found their way into the mind of the preacher, but never succeeded in gripping his heart. Such preaching has been the bane of the Church. And it has been with us too long. But it cannot survive if the preacher goes on the air; for the radio sermon must face things as they really are. It must come to grips with the burning issues of life. If it fails to do this, it will end in a fiasco. More than one radio preacher has discovered this to his own mortification; and the lesson which his experiences have taught him will be of inestimable value to every preacher of the Gospel in his own pulpit work; for every sermon should be timely and practical.

Another lesson which the radio sermon is teaching us is that we must present our message in such a way as to attract and hold the interest of the average American and to make a lasting impression upon him. In other words, radio-preaching is leading us to a proper evaluation and understanding of true audience psychology, especially in regard to the American mind. In the past too much of our preaching was designed solely for persons who had been reared in our own Church. To them it was intelligible, but to others it very frequently was not. No doubt this is one of the reasons why certain strata and groups in American life have always remained untouched, at least unaffected, by our missionary efforts. But doesn't it seem as though our radio broadcasts, in which we step before the American people as witness-bearers, ought gradually to improve our technique in this respect?

A third benefit which is apt to accrue to our pulpit from its contacts with the radio is compactness of structure and style. How many sermons of the past were long-winded, rambling dissertations, interesting perhaps, but verbose and loosely organized. But radio time is limited, and it costs money. As a result the sermon delivered by an experienced radio preacher is comparatively short, compact, and well articulated. Every word is weighed in the balance, and there is a determined effort to say as much as possible within the allotted time,

and to say it as clearly and as effectively as possible. This requires clarification and compression of thought, skilful organization, and succinct expression. All three are valuable assets to the man in the pulpit.

Closely allied with the foregoing is the encouragement which the radio sermon gives the preacher in regard to the cultivation of literary excellence. Grammatical errors, Germanisms, barbarisms, slovenly style, and threadbare diction are tabu in radio-broadcasting. There is a persistent striving for correctness, beauty, and effectiveness. Hence many radio addresses, also on religious programs, are literary gems. As a result, churchgoing people are raising their demands in regard to the literary standards of their preachers. In order to please them, a sermon must not only be doctrinally correct, practical, and helpful, but also attractive and enjoyable from a literary point of view. These demands are in perfect harmony with the best traditions of the Christian pulpit. Read the powerful oratorical productions of the prophets, the beautiful discourses of Jesus, the eloquent presentations of Paul, and the great sermons of the Church's messengers down through the centuries, and you will find that the Christian pulpit has always cultivated the beautiful. Many of the masterpieces of literature are the creations of Christian preachers. Our own preaching at present leaves much to be desired in this respect; and if the radio really succeeds in raising the literary standards of our pulpits, it will achieve something for which many teachers of composition and homiletics have hitherto labored in vain.

Another lesson that is forced upon us by the radio is the stern truth that a preacher should never plagiarize. Now, it is a well-known fact that some preachers of the Gospel are confirmed plagiarists. They will in their indignation punish a pupil who hands in another pupil's work as his own; but at the same time they will Sunday after Sunday, without blinking an eye, preach sermons written by other men. Now, it is true that no man must be condemned for making judicious use of other men's sermons. On the contrary, every one of us should study the sermons of successful preachers with a view to improving his own preaching. We may freely appropriate their thoughts, yes, even many of their telling expressions. But to take a sermon just as it is and to deliver it verbatim or nearly verbatim is nothing less than plagiarism and, except in cases of extreme emergency, can never be condoned. This important, though oft-forgotten, principle is brought home to us with unusual force by the radio; for it would certainly require a great deal of hardihood for a man to read a plagiarized sermon over the air.

Finally the radio ought to encourage and help us to improve our delivery. Some of us have never been properly trained in this respect, and others, without realizing it, have in the course of years become rather slovenly. There are faulty pronunciations, foreign

accents, sloppy enunciations, there is faulty voice production and either a total lack of vocal expression or some peculiar artificial modulations, which mar the address and either weary or amuse the hearer. All these faults — and many others — are exposed and magnified by the radio; for in radio-broadcasting everything depends upon how one regulates his voice. Accordingly, the radio can well assist us in improving our delivery; but it will succeed in doing this only if we choose as our patterns men who speak correctly and if we ourselves study the fundamental principles of vocal expression with diligence and perseverance and then prepare with the utmost care for every radio engagement. That the radio often does spoil a good delivery, however, will be pointed out in the next section of this paper.

2.

While it is true that the broadcasting of good Christian sermons will in many respects react favorably upon our regular congregational preaching, every reflective observer will admit that certain characteristic features and tendencies are discernible in radio-preaching which, if they were to be transplanted to our regular pulpits, would constitute a grave menace to the future preaching of our Church. This, of course, is not the fault of the men who proclaim the Gospel of salvation by means of the radio, but rather the result of the natural limitations of radio-broadcasting itself.

Strange as it may seem, the radio preacher finds his first and greatest handicap in that very audience which opens up to him almost unlimited opportunities as an ambassador of Christ. It is an unseen and unknown audience. Nobody, least of all the preacher himself, knows who belongs to it. There may be millions, but there may also be only a few. And who can tell what the spiritual status and the personal problems of the individuals may be who are listening in? As a result the radio preacher must speak in terms that are suited to all. He is compelled to address himself to every one in general and to *no* one in particular. This naturally affects the contents of his sermons, especially their practical applications, and deprives his address of one of the most cherished elements of pastoral preaching, the specific and intimate application of the truth of the text to the needs of the people. It would be a pity if we in our preaching were to abandon the specific pastoral application of Law and Gospel, so characteristic of Lutheran preaching, for the vague and stereotyped applications in vogue over the radio. And yet there seems to be a tendency in this direction even now.

Another handicap that harasses the radio preacher is his consciousness of the fact that his hearers may, whenever they desire, tune him out. In other words, he knows that a radio audience will listen only to what it likes to hear. The moment the discourse becomes unpleasant, the dial is turned and the preacher silenced. It is but

natural that under these conditions the preacher will put forth every effort to make his sermon as interesting and captivating as possible. And there is nothing reprehensible in this; on the contrary, such efforts are always commendable. But at the same time the danger exists that this may result in the toning down of certain disagreeable truths or in a cheap sensationalism which is utterly unworthy of the dignity of the Christian pulpit. Unfortunately there are several preachers of other denominations on the air at the present time who have fallen victim to these temptations, and their bad example is a constant menace to the high cause of Christian preaching.

Closely allied with the foregoing is the alarming tendency observable in radio-preaching generally to neglect expository and doctrinal sermons. It is true, in a measure the Scriptures are explained and the doctrines of the Church referred to. Without this there could be no preaching of the Gospel. Yet the fact remains that the carefully developed doctrinal sermon, which has always been one of the elements of power in Lutheran preaching, and the thoroughgoing expository sermon, by which the hearer is led into the very text of the Scriptures themselves, is being relegated to a subordinate position in the average radio calendar and at times is even eliminated from it altogether. Many are of the opinion that sermons of this type are not practical and soul-stirring enough for a radio audience. But this is a mistake. There is nothing more practical, helpful, and interesting, even for people of our own day, than truly expository and doctrinal sermons, provided they are skilfully developed and directly and sympathetically focused upon contemporary problems and conditions. For more reasons than one of course the radio preacher cannot follow precisely the homiletical methods employed by his brother in the pulpit; nor does he have the time to give much attention to the niceties of systematic doctrinal presentation or the minute details of the text. As a result it is an easy thing for him to drift into a method of sermonizing which concentrates upon practical discussions of current topics and fervent appeals and exhortations, without first laying a satisfactory foundation for these necessary features of his discourse by the explanation of the text and clear doctrinal statements. And it will be just as easy for the rest of us to drift in the same direction in our preaching, especially since there are not a few persons in the average congregation who are not in sympathy with the traditional Lutheran sermon. Let us take heed lest we, perhaps unwittingly, yield to their demands.

Finally there is a possibility that radio-preaching may have an unwholesome effect upon the delivery of our preachers, although, as was pointed out above, the very opposite should really be the case. In order to justify this statement, nothing more is necessary than to remind the reader of the following three facts: 1) The radio sermon

must be read; but reading a sermon from a manuscript when standing face to face with a congregation is not a method of delivery to be recommended to the rank and file of our preachers. 2) Because the radio sermon must be read, the preacher is in constant danger of losing his natural voice modulations, which alone can give expression to thought and feeling, and substituting either a dreary monotone or — and this is by far worse — an unnatural, artificial pattern of modulation, such as the "holy tone," by which his thought is obscured and his feeling made to appear as a mere affectation. 3) In order to hold the attention of his hearers and to make his speech effective, the radio preacher must speak more rapidly than the man on the platform and in the pulpit; moreover, he must also avoid all longer pauses. This is made necessary by the fact that he is not seen by his audience. He cannot make use of pantomime, but is compelled to convey his personality to his audience by means of his voice alone. It has been definitely established by scientific research that, whereas a speaker normally gets the best results by uttering 100 to 125 words a minute, the radio speaker, in order to be at his best, must speak at the rate of 150 to 175 words a minute. Bearing these facts in mind, one may readily understand how it is possible for a preacher to spoil his delivery by a careless use of the radio or an injudicious transfer of radio tactics to his regular pulpit work.

In the preceding paragraphs a few of the most probable reactions of radio-preaching upon our Lutheran pulpit have been listed without any attempt on the part of the writer to exhaust the subject. It is evident that some of these reactions should with all diligence be fostered and accelerated, while others must be vigorously opposed and eventually rendered ineffective if the work of our pulpits is not to suffer. May God give us grace to meet this twentieth-century problem of preaching with wisdom and fortitude!

St. Louis, Mo. E. J. Friedrich.

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